

# 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 John 3:16

"We have come to know love by this: that Jesus laid down his life for us; thus we ought to lay down our lives for our fellow Christians." (NET Bible)

## Evangelism

What is our role in evangelism? The word evangelism is typically taken to mean sharing the Good News of new life in Christ with someone who has yet to believe in Him for eternal life.

As apologist Greg Koukl (<https://www.str.org/w/harvester-or-gardener-?>) has pointed out, we are often called to mainly serve as a "gardener" rather than a "harvester." Certainly if the ground has been turned over and the Holy Spirit is ready, harvesting a new life in Christ is very appropriate.

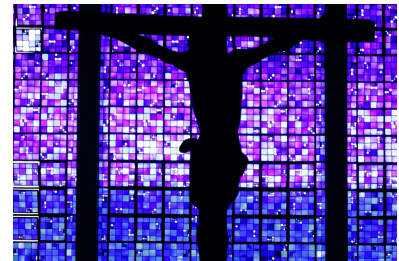
However, in today's world, there often needs to be an extensive time of gardening – answering questions, challenging assumptions, helping people see that God exists and that He loves them – before they are ready to place their faith in Him alone for eternal life.

One way to learn how to "garden" better is to learn how to really listen to people and ask the right questions. One resource for this is the book *Tactics* by Greg Koukl. A DVD is also available.

## Following Jesus is Costly

by David Dennis

One of our memory verses this fall is 1 John 3:16: "We have come to know love by this: that Jesus laid down his life for us; thus we ought to lay down our lives for our fellow Christians." (NET Bible) Jesus is our Perfect Example of sacrificing for others. Through His death on the cross we are made righteous. Through belief alone in Christ alone for eternal life, we have that precious gift (John 3:16).



The gift of eternal life is free (without cost on our part). However, there is a cost to following Jesus. Sacrifice. Giving up for others. Preferring one another. These are terms that many times we want to avoid. Romans 12:10

"Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well. You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had.." Philippians 2:3-5 (NET Bible)

When I think of sacrifice, I think of Dr. Richard Spann. I can vividly recall his coming to the VA Hospital early in the morning hours (5:30 am) to meet with me weekly as that was the only time I had available.

I think of my pilot friend who gave up a lucrative career to fly for MAF in Papua.

I think of the mother and father home schooling their children, training them in the ways of the Lord. I think of the Christian schoolteacher striving to honor Christ despite opposition.

The cost of following Christ is real. And worth it.

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## Goads and Nails

Excerpt from *Goads and Nails*  
Vol. 1, pp 97-100.

*"Over the years I've come to the conclusion that a person would be successful spiritually if the first five verses on assurance were all they had for their walk."* – Lorne Sanny

"It is important to remember the beginning some of us had as we first became followers of Christ. These verses, designated the C-rations by early Navigators were often the first verses memorized, studied and applied to their lives. They were considered to be foundational. They were the necessary building blocks upon which further spiritual knowledge would be developed. If our understanding and application of the truths of these verses is firmly established, our building will be solid.

"Unfortunately, I've seen some followers of Christ over the years whose spiritual walk has struggled in these five areas. They may have pursued ... studies of various doctrines..mastered some knowledge of prophecy, and missiology...but they lack assurance in one or more of these ... areas.

"1 John 5:11-12, John 16:24, 1 Cor. 10:13, 1 John 1:9, Proverbs 3:5-6."

– Richard Spann

## Last Words — by Larry Beck

Have you ever considered what you would want your final words to be to those you love? Would they be words of affirmation, confession, regret, a shared memory, or words of wisdom gleaned from reflecting on the years of your life?

When family members and other acquaintances are removed from one another, especially when one passes from this life, most will consider the legacy of their loved one's actions and perhaps the words they left imprinted on those who knew them. The most impactful of all is the testimony of the life lived, but sometimes the final words spoken by those who love one another will impact the hearers for the rest of their lives. The last words my mother spoke to me before she passed was "I love you". I can't remember her ever saying those words to me until that day and thus those words are more meaningful to me as my last memory of her spoken words.

Regardless of what a person claims to believe about their eternal destiny, ***Ecclesiastes 3:11*** instructs us that ***"...He has also set eternity in their heart..."*** Accordingly, most every person will want to be remembered in some way, perhaps for their life's work or something they've said, or written.

In the context of this writing about "LAST WORDS," a recent study revealed the last moments and words of two avowed atheists:

Napoleon Bonaparte - "I die before my time, and my body will be given back to the earth. Such is the fate of him who has been called the great Napoleon. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal kingdom of Christ!"

Sir Thomas Scott [Chancellor of England] – "Until this moment I thought there was neither a God nor a hell. Now I know and feel that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty."

These men spoke words of evident regret and hopelessness as they expired from this life.

In contrast, consider some of the last words of Jesus to His disciples ***"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*** ***"...I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."*** (Ref ***Matthew 28:18-20; John 14:3***) These are words of eternal promise and encouragement to help sustain the disciples in the days to come.

The Ephesian Elders and Paul knew they would never see each other when Paul spoke these words recorded in ***Acts 20:32*** – ***"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."*** It is an undeniable truth that the Word of God is as essential to the Christian's spiritual life, as food and water are to their physical life.

If you are able to choose what your last words would be to those you love, consider, the intended purpose and legacy of Paul's words in ***Acts 20:32***.

## The Road to Emmaus

By Marvin Soliah

**The Road to Emmaus** in (Luke 24) is one of the most tender stories of Jesus being with his disciples after the resurrection. I think we can almost feel the pathos or the presence of our Lord along this seven-mile journey to Emmaus. At first, they could not recognize him and only saw a stranger. Even though they loved Jesus, their doubts kept them from “*seeing*” Him inwardly. They were about to go **from despair to triumphant faith in the resurrection**. Their hearts would be opened. As they walked along this lonely road, they poured out their hearts of concern to Jesus which reminds us of the hymn - **“I Must Tell Jesus.”**



Painting by Robert Zund  
“The Way to Emmaus” 1877

Do we have some of those same feelings and concerns along “**our road**” in life? Jesus guided the disciples from **hopelessness to celebration**. He “**nourished**” their faith so they could see His real presence with them. In Luke 24: 15 – Jesus drew near to them and went with them. Do you have a sense of **Jesus drawing near to you as well?** In verse 16, their eyes were **constrained** so they did not know Him, and in verse 17 Jesus asked, “Why are you so sad?” By the time we read verse 28 and 29 they were pleading with Jesus to stay with them as they were drawing near to the village of Emmaus and they constrained **Him to stay with them... and he did**. Is that the attitude of our hearts as well? This reminds me of another hymn, “**Abide With Me.**” *However, in John 16 :7 Jesus said it is to your advantage that I go way (physically) so I can send the Holy Spirit to come to you.*

In verse 30 they were **breaking bread together** in such **dear fellowship as** He took **the bread and broke it and blessed it**. Then in verse 31, their eyes were opened and **they knew him** ! It was then that He vanished from their sight. Do you remember times of great fellowship that we have as Christians with each other? Their hearts “**burned with the need to see and be with Jesus**” and He opened (**explained**) **the Scriptures to them!** (Verse 32) One commentary described this as “**enthusiasm flooded their whole being.**”

In verse 33 they returned to Jerusalem and told the others and in verse 34 the **Lord is Risen Indeed!** Finally, in verse 35 we see a very happy report. They told of the things that happened on the Road to Emmaus and the breaking of bread. Wouldn't you like to have been there?

This Emmaus journey symbolizes their faith journey in life where their hearts changed from fear and anxiety to belief and rejoicing. Understanding their faith journey should help us as we sometimes go through trials and tribulations. Jesus is listening with empathy to our sorrows. We too can enter into this process of inner healing.

Consider the enthusiasm they had to share this wonderful message with others as they returned to Jerusalem! They were inspired to be a **missionary or a disciple** or...maybe even a **Kansas Navigator?**

Come to think of it, have **you** shared these “**miraculous mysteries**” with anyone ... **Ever?**

## Spotlight on Online Resources

### ◆Discipleship Library:

Skip and Buzzie Gray are long-time Navigator staff who have had a heart for discipleship for many decades. In this [vintage talk on Marriage and Family](#), both Skip and Buzzie share their insights into a successful family.



### ◆Kansas Navigators:

[“The Walk of Faith”](#) is the latest blog post from Richard Spann. Dr. Spann shares insights from Colossians 2:6-7 and thoughts from G. Campbell Morgan. You will be greatly blessed as you read this profound blog post. These blogs are all found on our [www.kansasnavs.org](http://www.kansasnavs.org) website.

### ◆Podcast “Making Disciples Naturally”

Be sure to check out our interview with Dr. Don Davis on “Making Disciples Naturally.” He shares his thoughts on discipling and how that is inextricably tied to the local church. A complete index to all our podcasts is found [here on our website](#). We think you’ll be encouraged by these podcasts found on Apple Podcasts, iTunes, Overdrive, Spotify and [on our website](#).



## Back to the basics ... The Wheel Illustration

The Wheel illustration is a classic, simple, yet profound way to express different key aspects of the Christian life. The first 12 verses of the [Topical Memory System](#) are the basis for the different aspects of the Wheel (Christ the Center: 2 Cor. 5:17 and Galatians 2:20; Obedience to Christ: John 14:21 and Romans 12:1, etc). There are numerous applications one can make from a study of the Wheel — How Christ must be at the center of our lives, how He is the driving force for our life, how obedience is where the “rubber meets the road,” etc.

But recently I have been thinking about the Wheel as a “**lifesaver**” in the sea of life. I was listening to a podcast recently where the speaker was giving advice for young Christians going to college. He listed key areas to emphasize as they went off to school: Keeping Christ at the center of one’s life (making decisions based on His desires), praying constantly, staying in the Word daily, being connected in fellowship with other believers and finally the importance of apologetics — knowing why we believe what we believe. I was impressed at how similar those bits of advice were to the Wheel illustration and how each of our lives would be a success if we truly held on to the “**lifesaver**” of these principles and concepts. (Here is a [free download of The Wheel](#).)