

“We train disciplemakers...”



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Update from Kansas Communities Ministry

Wisely Choosing Among Competing Time Demands

What will last into eternity?
Check out our podcasts at:

[**Making Disciples
Naturally**](#)

Men, mark your calendars
for our Spring Men's Retreat

**April 1-2, 2022 at
Crosswind Conference
Center**

Want to learn more about
sharing your faith?

**Check out the article
on page 4**

Can you hear me?

by David Dennis

My grandfather had one of those old Zenith hearing aides that he wore in his front shirt pocket. The two-wire cable then snaked its way up into his right ear so he could hear us. I always knew when the hearing aid batteries were getting low when I walked in the front room. The TV was super loud!



It was at those times that I had a really hard time talking to him. He just couldn't hear much at all without significant amplification. And that was often very frustrating to me. Try as I might, I couldn't get my point across. I'd have to repeat it and repeat it. We couldn't “connect” at those times.

It's the same way when we are listening to someone else share their story. They may not feel like they are connecting with us if we are not listening well. Like me as a little child with my grandpa, we may not be connecting.

As trainers of disciplemakers it is important that we honor and truly love the people we are coming alongside. Service to them, sacrificing for them, praying for them are all excellent and important ways to love them. However, there is one way that we may forget — to truly listen to them.

Proverbs 18:13 says, “To answer before listening —that is folly and shame” (NIV).
(continued on p. 3)

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“Those who control their tongue will have a long life; opening your mouth can ruin everything.” Proverbs 13:3 (NLT)

Mike Treneer to be speaker at Spring Men's Retreat

Mr. Mike Treneer, former International Vice President of the Navigators will be speaking at this year's Men's Retreat, April 1-2, 2022. Mike will be speaking on "Learning how to advance the Gospel from the Apostle Paul: a study of First Thessalonians."

Mike is known for his careful exegesis of scripture as well as his engaging speaking style. You will be greatly blessed as you listen to his messages as well as interact with him at the retreat.

He is from England and graduated with a degree in chemical engineering. He and his wife Chris have been on Navigator staff since 1971, having been involved in multiple areas of ministry,

including ministry to students, community and local church-based ministries. They pioneered the work in Nigeria and lived for 16 years in Nairobi, Kenya.

Be sure to mark your calendars for April 1-2, 2022. Registration will be opening soon. Why not invite a couple of friends or family to join you. This will be a conference you won't want to miss!



Goads and Nails

By Richard Spann

El Roi: The God Who Sees
El Elyon: The God Most High
El Shaddai: The All-Sufficient One
— Vol. 2, pages 23-27

"Every Friday morning at this point in my life began the same way. I would meet a friend from 6 am to 7 am in the church parking lot. We spent this time sharing Scripture and praying... This particular morning he was late so I walked into the church library... I started to read 'Lord, I Want to Know You, A Devotional Study on the Names of God,' by Kay Arthur... The three names that captivated my interest the most were El Roi, El Elyon and El Shaddai. The first of these names is El Roi, 'the God who sees.' Nothing in all creation escapes His eyes. He is the One who knows where I am and how I came to be there.

"I arrived at my office at 10 am to find a letter addressed to me from the hospital laboratory. As the contents of the letter began soaking in, I began to be overwhelmed with the significance of the names of God that I had studied early that morning. The Lord, who was revealed on the pages of the Old Testament as El Roi, El Elyon and El Shaddai, was now writing in the pages of my life. El Roi (the God who sees) saw each cell of my body and knew that there was a small area of cancer in the prostate. As El Elyon, He had arranged my schedule that morning. As El Shaddai, He had wrapped His arms around me with His comfort and presence."

■ “We train disciplemakers...”

Can you hear me? (continued from page one)

Truly listening to someone communicates that you value them as a person. You value their ideas (even though there may be disagreement). You honor them by listening well. Listening well doesn't come naturally but it is critical in showing your love for someone. As we know, “People don't care how much we know until they know how much we care.” We care for people by listening well to them.

You've no doubt been on the receiving end of trying to express your thought, opinion, etc, and it is clear the other person is not “getting it.” Perhaps they are distracted. Perhaps they interrupt you in order to make sure you get their point. If you feel passionately about a topic (like sharing the love of Jesus with someone) and you sense they are not listening well to you, how do you feel? I know I feel put down, not valued, not respected.

What are some ways we communicate that we are not listening well and thus not loving someone well?

- ♦ We interrupt. We can't wait to get our “2 cents” in.
- ♦ We are constantly thinking of how we are going to answer the other person. We think mostly about what our response will be after they stop talking.
- ♦ We don't look at them in the eyes while they are speaking. We instead check our cell phone or look around the room.

What did our Lord and Master Jesus do? Look at the interaction Jesus had with the Samaritan woman in John 4. We note that he asked her for something (a drink - John 4:7). He then let her talk (4:9). He responded to what she just said (4:10). Throughout this conversation, He gives her time to talk and express herself and then He responds. The result? Salvation for her and many in her town.

Recently I was in a “spiritual conversation” with a new friend. He was very concerned about a certain theological issue. The more he talked, the more I was trying to interrupt him and explain some very good Scriptural points that I had thought of. Then it dawned on me. He was communicating on a heart/emotional level. I was trying to communicate on a cognitive/mind level. And never the twain shall meet!

After realizing this, I simply stopped talking and focused on what he was saying. I echoed back to him what he was saying. I stopped trying to interrupt and stopped trying to make my point. His attitude changed. He slowed down because he knew he was being heard and was being valued.

As we train disciplemakers, let's model good listening skills and honoring them as people who are worth listening to!

For more discussion of this, please listen to our podcast [Making Disciples Naturally](#), episode 105.

“There are two kinds of people in the world: Those who need to know Christ and those who need to know Him better.”

— Jim Morris (founder of the Kansas Communities Ministry)

■ “We train disciplemakers...”

Sharing our faith ...

I am in the middle of the book How to Talk about Jesus - without being that guy by Sam Chan (Published by Zondervan, November 2020). So far I am very impressed. The author has a list of eight items that help us to practically share our faith with others. Here is the first principle:

“Merge universes”

We all have “plausibility indexes.” That is, there are things that we believe to be true and things that we think can’t possibly be true. We all have mechanisms that we have gained over the years that help us decide how plausible a story is. For example, let me tell you a story about my dog who is quite amazing. He can actually talk. No really, he actually talks. The other day my wife and I were taking a walk and commenting on our neighbor’s yard. Then, all of a sudden our dog started to tell us about how he often goes over and digs in the neighbor’s yard. He even started to feel a little guilty about it the longer we talked.

Would you believe me? Probably not.

Then suppose I told you a story about this baby that was born 2000 years ago to a virgin — that’s right, a virgin. He was perfect. I mean PERFECT. He never made a mistake. He then grew up and actually turned water into wine at a wedding, healed people’s vision and paralysis and even raised his friend from the dead. To top it off, he himself was dead and came back to life!

Would you believe me? Probably so since you are reading this newsletter and likely have some degree of Christian background. But what seems plausible to the Christian may be quite implausible to a non-believer.

But this makes the point that as hard as it is for you and me to believe in a talking dog, it is also hard for many people to believe in the Jesus story. Why does one story seem plausible and the other one not?

Chan suggests three things that help us determine plausibility: Community, Experience and Data (facts and evidence). Now, which one is most significant in helping us form a plausibility index? Probably you and I would like to believe it is the latter — data. If we could only give people the facts and evidence, they would believe, or so we think.

But indeed it is not typically the evidence that persuades us, according to Chan. It is community. That’s right. What do the people in your community believe? Chances are high that your beliefs align pretty close to those of the people you hang out with and the people you respect.

So when it comes to faith, Chan suggests **merging universes**. That is, we must get into the community of non-believers and also invite them to our communities. Merge interests. Interact with them. Befriend them.

Seems like that’s what Jesus did too!

“My purpose in life is to allow the invisible
Christ to be made visible.”

— Ian Thomas