

“We train disciplemakers...”



Running the Race p. 4



How to Talk About Jesus p. 2

Update from Kansas Communities Ministry

The importance of long term vision

Hear Mike Treneer's story and discipleship thoughts. Check out our podcasts at:

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

Men, sign up TODAY for our men's retreat:

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

What does
“Running the race” mean?

**Check out the article
on page 4**

Mike Treneer to speak at Men's Retreat

“Learning how to advance the Gospel from the Apostle Paul — a study of 1 Thessalonians” will be the topic as Mr. Mike Treneer speaks at our Spring Men's Retreat April 1-2, 2022 at Crosswind Conference Center in Hesston, Kansas. Mike is the former International President of the Navigators.



He was born and raised in England and came to know the Lord in college through a rather miraculous turn of events. We recently interviewed Mike for our Podcast “Making Disciples Naturally” where he goes into more detail about his conversion and subsequent life events.

Mike graduated with a degree in chemical engineering. He and his wife Chris pioneered the Navigator work in Nigeria and have worked on the college campus and in the community. He has been on staff with the Navigators since 1971. Mike is known for his careful exegesis of Scripture as well as his engaging presentations.

Deadline for registration is soon approaching. Why not sign up today and also bring a son, grandson, friend or coworker? Go to KansasNavs.org on the home page for links to sign up either online or by downloading a brochure and mailing it in. Cost is \$115/person which includes overnight lodging and three meals. First-time attendees and students can attend for only \$59! (Continued on page 3)

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“For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed [it] not [as] the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.” 1 Thessalonians 2:13

How to talk about Jesus without being “that guy” by Sam Chan

Last month we introduced some of the great ideas found in this book by Sam Chan. We noted that today it is important when getting to know people and starting to introduce them to Jesus, we need to “merge universes” (see last month’s newsletter). Today we look at another aspect of this: the markedly changing landscape of evangelism.

The author notes that there have been three large trends in evangelism in the last 100 years:

1. The “Billy Graham” era: A 20-minute talk given to people who knew it to be true. Then ...
2. Early 21st century: We spent time countering “defeater beliefs” like “Is God really there?” and “Did He create everything?” Then ...
3. Today, religion is oftentimes looked at as the oppressor (being against many people and lifestyles).



Formerly the sequence was Belief → Belonging (plugged in to a church) → Behavior (church tells us how to live). Today it is more likely to be Belonging → Behavior (change to becoming more “like us”) → Belief (believing in Jesus for eternal life).

The point? Evangelism is often much more of a community process and less of a solo endeavor. We need each other!

Goads and Nails

By Richard Spann

“Many start well;
few finish well.”

— Vol. 2, pages 29-32

“We continually hear about those who have followed Christ for many years whose lives have been marred by moral failure, corrupt financial practices or the destructive behavior resulting from the arrogance of authority. It is as prevalent in our leaders as in those who follow, as common in the pulpit as in the pew. The fallout from these failures affects not only their own lives and ministries; but there is a slow recovery from the devastation it leaves in its wake, affecting the lives of many others. Such was the case in the Old Testament where we see the start of King Asa’s reign described in II Chronicles 14:2, ‘Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God.’ His finish was described in II Chronicles 16:9-10. ‘... “You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war.”’

“In contrast to the above, we see the Apostle Paul describe his finish in II Timothy 4:7-8. ‘I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.’ What was it that so characterized the life of the Apostle that he was able to finish well? We find three things that enabled him, and will also enable us, to finish well in his statement found in Philippians 3:14. ‘I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.’ First and foremost, he established the goal of his life. Secondly, the word “press” implies that Paul needed to exert effort to meet this goal. Thirdly, he anticipated resistance. Paul not only experienced resistance to his goal, but he expected it to occur.”

■ “We train disciplemakers...”

Mike Treneer speaking at men's retreat (continued from page 1)

From the brochure:

"Evangelism and discipleship are commanded by our Lord and are desperately needed in our world today. Even though we live in the culture of the 21st century, are there timeless principles for these important activities that we can learn from the Apostle Paul? The book of First Thessalonians holds a wealth of knowledge and encouragement which can be applied today. Mike will help us learn to practically advance the Gospel with power and vision with a view toward transformed lives, all in the context of community.

Message titles are:

- ◆ Advancing the Gospel with Power: Paul's Evangelistic Methods (1 Thessalonians 1:1-2:13)
- ◆ Advancing the Gospel with Vision: Paul's Long-term Aim (1 Thessalonians 2:7-3:13)
- ◆ Advancing the Gospel by Discipling: Paul's Focus on Transformed Lives (1 Thessalonians 4:1-5:11)
- ◆ Advancing the Gospel Together: Paul's Guidelines for Community (1 Thessalonians 5:11-28)"



Our retreats and conferences are designed to allow time to relax and relate as well as to be refreshed and transformed by the renewing our minds (Romans 12:2) as we listen and study God's Word. This is a great opportunity to bring others to an environment of encouragement. It especially helps those new to the faith to interact with others who have walked the walk for a number of years and to help them see that there is value in faithfulness and pursuing a closer relationship with the Lord.

The lodging is comfortable and the food is great! Sign up today while there is still room! And we encourage you to sign up several others with you to come as a group. You won't be disappointed.

“My purpose is to allow the invisible Christ to be made visible.” — Major Ian Thomas, Christian Evangelist and Major in the British Expeditionary Force, serving in Belgium at the onset of WWII

■ “We train disciplemakers...”

Running the Race by Richard Spann (This is an excerpt from the complete blog found on our website KansasNavs.org/blog)

The winter Olympics have started. Last night I watched curling. It is truly a sport that could only have been invented in the frozen wasteland of our planet! Skiing was also featured as were previews of other competitions to come. Over the next month many contestants will stand shoulder to shoulder with others at the starting line, all with a desire to be the first one to cross the finish line. We all enjoy watching these scenes unfold. What we seldom realize, however, is how similar our lives are to the Olympics. We have many contestants clamoring for first place in our lives. They each one want to be first. These include our jobs, hobbies, relationships with others, our career advancement, accumulation of possessions, plans for retirement, and, oh yes, our relationship with God.

I recall with amusement, and some conviction, an ongoing description of a race described by LeRoy Eims, a Navigator mentor to many people over the years. His comments were as follows. “They are at the Gate! God jumps out in front and takes an early lead, but career, hobbies and friends are close behind! At the turn hobbies is closing fast, while career is advancing along the rail! Friends is coming up along the outside and God and friends are neck to neck as they make the turn! Career advances to the front on the backstretch and God falls two lengths behind! As they round the final turn all four are neck and neck! God makes a final lunge at the end and wins by a nose!”

Have you ever had days like that? You were running ragged with too many irons in the fire. You remember after dinner that you neglected your relationship with God most of the day so you grab a devotional book or read a chapter in the Bible, pray for a few minutes and go off to sleep, thinking to yourself, “Well, at least God won by a nose!”

LeRoy brings home his point even more clearly with the following hypothetical scene. He describes it as follows. “Let’s say that I travel on a business trip to New Orleans to spend several days there with various people. As is my habit, I call my wife Virginia every night to let her know how I am getting along. The first night I call to tell her that the meetings are going well and that I have met a young lady that I am having breakfast with the next morning. The next evening I call again and tell her that all the projects are going well and that I have really enjoyed meeting this lady, so much so in fact that I had lunch and dinner with her as well. I then added ‘But don’t worry, Virginia. You’re still number one!’” Still number one, indeed! How do you think Virginia would react? How would you react to this? More importantly how do you think God reacts when we do this to Him? What Leroy is telling us is that no one else, and nothing else, should even be in the race! ...

There are no competitors. We run with the purpose of demonstrating the glory, strength and might of Christ Jesus. “We have been given fullness in Christ.” (Colossians 2:10) “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (II Corinthians 3:18) Paul says “For to me, to live is Christ.” (Philippians 1:21) He will, Himself, by His presence produce wonder and bring praise to His name. “In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16) As we run the race united to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, even the defects and problems in our lives (cracks in our jar that let His light out!) serve but to show others that it is Christ within and not our lives that contain the power that is seen. “But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.” (II Corinthians 4:7)

This is the race that Paul was referring to in I Corinthians 9:24 and which he himself was to complete. “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (II Timothy 4:7) This is the race that we are called to complete as well, making the invisible Christ visible to others so that they may see His Glory. It is my prayer that your race will glorify Him and bring praise to His name! In Christ, Richard Spann

“I would rather have those who follow me drink
from a running brook than from a stagnant pool.”
— Howard Hendricks