

“We train disciplemakers...”



Eternal life? Who cares?
— p. 3



Come near to God
— p. 4

Update from Kansas Communities Ministry

Discipling Refugees

What does it look like to minister to refugees? Learn from the firsthand experiences of a missionary on our podcast series.

[*Making Disciples Naturally Podcast*](#)

Does anyone still care about “eternal life”?

[*See the article on page 3*](#)

“Make Disciples” is this month’s featured blog <https://kansasnavs.org/2014/07/>

[*Dr. Spann’s blogs are found at KansasNavs.org/blogs*](#)

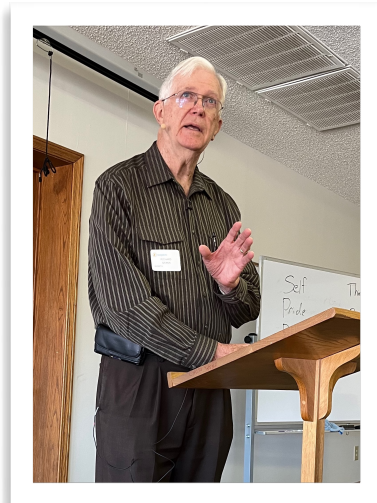
How and why should we draw near to God?

[*See the article on page 4*](#)

Fifty-seven men attend annual Spring Men’s Retreat at Cross Wind Conference Center

Many positive comments were shared about our Spring Men’s Retreat, held March 31 - April 1, 2023 at Hesston’s Cross Wind Conference Center. Our speaker, Dr. Richard Spann, shared from his heart numerous

real-life illustrations of how God had worked and is working today. We were encouraged to “Strengthen our Stakes” by developing a renewed heart for God’s Word, prayer, investing in the individual and deepening our knowledge of God. (Video, audio and PowerPoint will be posted on our website. Sign up for our email list to be notified.)



In addition to great and practical Scripture-based messages from Dr. Spann, our worship time was led by Wichita musician J. Michael Terrell. Several very positive comments were made regarding the worship time.

Mark your calendars now for our Fall Conference for all ages and both men and women October 13-14 at Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Wichita where we will hear Dave Hastings with SeeJesus Ministries (<https://www.seejesus.net>) share about deepening our prayer life.

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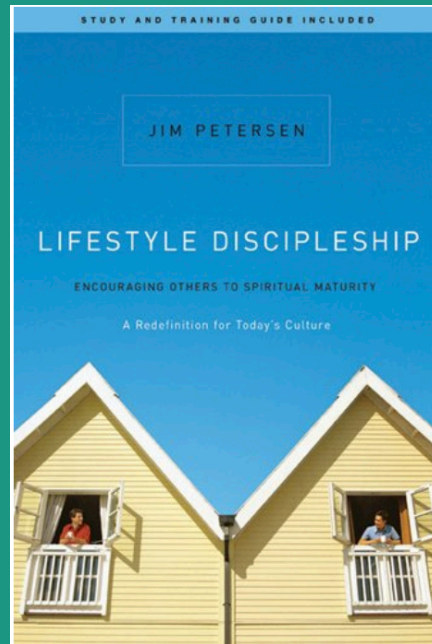
“And may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we do for you, so that your hearts are strengthened in holiness to be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.” 1 Thess. 3:12-13 (NET Bible)

Lifestyle Discipleship, Encouraging Others to Spiritual Maturity by Jim Peterson, Pub. by NavPress, 2014

In 1994, *Lifestyle Discipleship* by Jim Peterson was consumed by many in the discipling community. In this classic book, Jim noted the importance of capitalizing on being an “insider.” He noted that God placed believers in key situations for a purpose - to share God’s love and Christ’s offer of salvation as well as to help them grow in their faith.

Things have changed. Culture has changed - dramatically. While the concepts in the original book remain very valid, we need to take into account a different world today.

In this 2014 updated edition, the



author brings in additional ideas and insight to help us minister in our current culture. He skillfully explains concepts such as relativism (“whatever you believe is okay”), pluralism (“whatever you are into is okay”) and privatization (“whatever you believe, keep it to yourself”). Each of these has tremendously impacted our world and thus impacts how we go about making disciples. It is critical that we understand this.

In addition, he relates with brutal honesty that his assumptions in the past about who made progress in their walk and who failed to do so were because they were halfhearted, they lacked commitment or they were pursuing ungodly choices. Because of this, he (previously) considered them to have eliminated themselves from further attention. “As I look at these assumptions now, I feel embarrassed. They seemed good at the time, but they were only workable in an environment where everyone involved, from the discipler to the new Christian was really in the same context.” (Kindle location 111) He notes that that is no longer the case.

This is a very insightful analysis of our current situation and I highly recommend this book as we seek to continue to prayerfully make disciples, Lord willing.

Goads and Nails

By Richard Spann

“Our lives are defined by those things in which we find delight.”

— Vol. 3 pages 23-25

Webster’s dictionary defines delight as extreme satisfaction, anything that gives great pleasure, or a high degree of gratification of mind or sense. The Lord has given us many things to see and do during our earthly sojourn. He is pleased that we find satisfaction, and experience pleasure and even gratification in those things which He has given us to find delight. It is of interest to occasionally peruse the obituary column and note the remarks about the listed individuals. It is not uncommon to read such comments as “traveling was his delight,” or “she found great delight in her garden,” or “it was his delight to spend time on the golf course.” Their lives were accordingly defined by the paper as a traveler, a gardener, or a golfer. In scripture, however, the Lord also extends to us the opportunity to find delight in that which is of eternal benefit as well.

The first of these for our consideration is mentioned in Psalm 1:2-3. “But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” (KJV) It is not often that we hear of people whose lives were described as having a love of God’s word and delighting in the law of the Lord. Their lives stand out among others. Their lives have been fruitful, governed by the Lord through His word. The word of the Lord has had an effect on their life such that there is an unforgettable impact on the lives of others. Their lives were defined by their delight in God’s word...

To delight in the fear of the Lord brings us to yet another thing in which to find delight. It is found in Psalm 40:8. “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (KJV) Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ delighted in the fear of the Lord, and in doing His will. He has furthermore given us His life to live in us (Galatians 2:20) so that we may experience His delight in fearing God and doing God’s will. As Christ lives His life through us, enabling us to delight in the fear of the Lord, and to delight to do God’s will, our lives will be increasingly conformed to His. As we delight in what brought Him delight, the invisible Christ will be made visible, defining us as His followers...

In Christ, Richard Spann

“We train disciplemakers...”

“When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

—Thoughts on Luke 18:8 by David Dennis

Jesus commends faith. Hebrews 11:6 reminds us “...without faith it is impossible to please [Him,] for he who comes to God must believe that He is and [that] He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” (NASB-95) In the parable in Luke 18:1 and following, Jesus teaches that His disciples must “always pray and not lose heart.” Prayer itself is a powerful display of faith. If we didn’t think there is a God or that He hears and answers prayer, why pray in the first place?

But I want to look at verse 8 in this passage, where, at the end of His teaching on faith and prayer, He poses the question of whether He will find faith on the earth at His coming. Sometimes we wonder that as well!

I was visiting with a young doctor and sharing some thoughts about faith, eternal life, the importance of spiritual growth and so on. He listened patiently, but then said, “You know, I’m going to let eternity take care of itself. All I really care about is helping the world right here and right now.” That statement stunned me. Was he saying that the issue of our eternal destiny was of little to no importance to him? How can that be? *Will the Son of Man find faith on the earth?*



During college I was involved with a campus ministry that emphasized the importance of sharing our faith with others. We did “spiritual surveys” with the last question being something like, “Would you like to know more about eternal life?” Some cared and some didn’t. Nevertheless, it was enough of a topic to get the interest of some. Do people today care about such things (outside of our evangelical circles)? *Will the Son of Man find faith on the earth?*

We do want to impact our world and make it a better place. However, in the process of impacting our world, helping others physically and relationally, have we somehow made the issue of eternal life a secondary issue? Do people care about “eternal life” like they seemingly used to? Or do people in general agree with my doctor friend who said he would “let eternity take care of itself”? *Will the Son of Man find faith on the earth?* I don’t know. But here is what I do know:

- **"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."** Luke 19:10. *I should have the same heart for the lost that Jesus does.*
- **"And He [Holy Spirit], when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;"** John 16:8. *It's not my job to convict anyone of sin, righteousness and judgement.*
- **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."** John 3:16. *Jesus came to give us life, abundantly both now and in eternity. I want to preach faith alone, in Christ alone! That should be my driving conviction.*

“What is ‘man to man’? It is meeting another, individually - eyeball to eyeball - face to face. It involves sharing your whole life and ministry with him, so he, by the grace of God, will progress from spiritual immaturity in Christ to spiritual maturity in Christ.”

—Jack Griffin, who, along with his wife Mary, started the Navigator ministry in Australia in the 1960’s. This quote found at <http://discipleshiplibrary.com/pdfs/R1000.pdf> in a talk on “Man to man - how to do individual discipling.”

■ “We train disciplemakers...”

“Come Near to God” excerpt from blog by Richard Spann (complete blog found at <https://kansasnavs.org/come-near-to-god/>)

“Come near to God and He will come near to you.” James 4:8

Last year I set apart an entire day to come near to God. I had spent afternoons of four hours alone with God previously, but this was the first time that I had scheduled an entire day with Him. I did not meet anyone else the entire day except for an employee at Quik Trip. I ate all my meals alone and talked with no one else all day. I wanted a day just to spend in His presence, talking to Him in prayer, reading the Bible, and listening to Him.

Most of the day was involved in driving to different locations throughout the city. I spent time in prayer at all of these places. They included homes in which I had previously lived, schools, as well as several churches where I had attended earlier in life. All the hospitals, offices, and clinics in which I had once been employed were visited as well. The day brought back many memories of people and events. ... My mind went back to encounters I remembered. Many questions came to mind. In the case of some, I was not sure that they had ever come to faith in Christ. Others faced severe medical problems which had not been resolved at the time of my retirement. I particularly remembered those who were following Christ as a result of our time together. I had not seen some of them for a while and was concerned about their walk with the Lord. Significant time was spent at each location praying for the Lord’s work in each life I remembered.



Upon returning home late in the afternoon, I reclined in a chair and a quiet thought was given to me from the Lord. He reminded me that some of the day was to be spent listening to Him, but so far I had done all the talking! He prompted me to pick up the Bible where I had left off reading from the day before. He had something He wanted to say! The first four verses of Exodus chapter 34 were pretty hum-drum. They were about Moses chiseling out some stone tablets. (Yawn!) Then I came to verse five. This was His word for me that day. This is what He had been wanting me to know all day! This was His promise to me from James 4:8, which says, “Come near to me and I will come near to you.” The verse He picked out for me that day could not have been more perfect! “Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD.” (Exodus 34:5) He wanted me to know that from the beginning of that day until the end, He had been proclaiming His name, the LORD, to me. He was with me in every location, listening to every prayer, concerned about each individual, and answering each prayer as it was uttered! How do I know this? I know this because His name is the LORD, the becoming One. He is the One who becomes all I need Him to be. He also was assuring me that He was becoming all that the people I cared about needed as well. He was taking care of each one, drawing them further to Himself and building them up in Christ. He was also becoming what I needed in comfort, confidence and reassurance. He was reminding me of his promise given to us in I Corinthians 15:58, “Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” This day was a powerful personal reminder of His promise to us in James 4:8, “Come near to God and He will come near to you.” ...

In Christ, Richard Spann

“Rest in this - it is His business to lead, command, impel, send, call... It is your business to obey, follow, move, respond..”

— Jim Elliot, Missionary to the Auca people (quote found at <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/519516>)