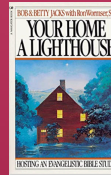


“We train disciplemakers...”



Home evangelistic outreach
— p. 2



On reaching closed minds
— p. 4

Update from Kansas Communities Ministry

Intentions vs actions

If I'm a Christian, why do I misbehave?

Making Disciples Naturally Podcast

How to make your home a lighthouse

See the article on page 2

“Emotion is no substitute for activity”

is this month's featured blog

<https://kansasnavs.org/2012/03/>

Dr. Spann's blogs are found at KansasNavs.org/blogs

Is there a way to reach someone seemingly closed to the things of Christ?

See the article on page 4

Make your local church a priority this summer!

The pandemic severely affected church attendance for a number of months. As of November 2022, according to Pew Research, in-person church attendance seems to be down about 20% compared to before the pandemic (the numbers are complex; see article here: <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2023/03/28/how-the-pandemic-has-affected-attendance-at-u-s-religious-services/>). In any event, the local church has been affected over the last 3 years to varying degrees, and typically not for the better.

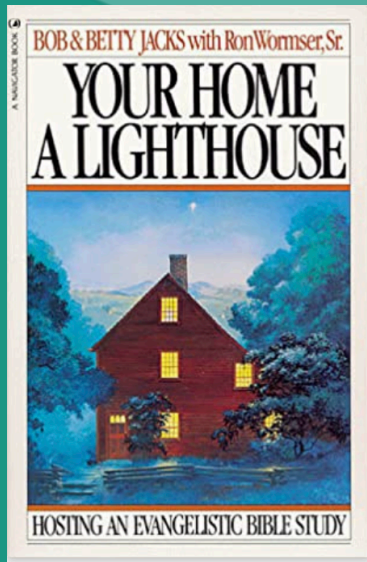
Secondly, as a “para-church ministry,” the Kansas Communities Ministry desires to come alongside the local church and be an active participant in helping people grow in their faith. The Lord has chosen to primarily work through the local church to reach the world for Christ and to help individuals grow in Christlikeness. We do not want to detract from the local church's role in any way; indeed, we wish to support and enhance the role of the local church.

So, this summer, when attendance may be down anyway due to travel, vacations, etc., let's not forget to do all we can to help, invest in, pray for and serve your local body of Christ. It is tempting to just “watch online” when you've slept in. It is tempting to just skip the service or the prayer group, etc., because you're getting ready to go on a trip. But the body of Christ needs you! As Paul told the Roman church: “so we, [being] many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.” Romans 12:5, NKJV.

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“But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. He called you to this salvation through our gospel, so that you may possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
—2 Thess. 2:13-14 (NET Bible)

Your Home a Lighthouse: Hosting an Evangelistic Bible Study by Bob and Betty Jacks, Pub. by Navpress, Feb. 1, 1987



Even though this little book was written over 30 years ago, it remains a proven method in introducing people to the Gospel in a non-threatening environment. Through years of experience in leading people to Christ, Bob and Betty Jacks relate a powerful yet simple methodology in evangelistic Bible study. (It remains available on Amazon.)

They recommend partnering with not more than one or two other

couples and making a list of friends and neighbors whom you'd like to invite. Written invitations go out for people to attend an exploratory, no-obligation dinner where it is explained that a Bible study will be offered over the next several weeks for anyone interested. Key elements are that no one will be put "on the spot" by being asked to read or answer questions, that Bibles will be provided for them if they wish and that no question is off limits.

Over a period of 6-8 weeks (could be fewer or more depending on the desires of the group), the Gospel of John is simply read aloud in the group and then discussed. It is definitely not a lecture format, but is simply an honest discussion of what the text says. There is no homework on the part of the participants.

It is important that most people in the group be non-Christians or non-churched, with a maximum of only 2 Christian couples. Also, it is important that people meet in a home for a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere.

This method has been used by several on the Kansas Communities team with good results. We urge you to consider this as an option for this summer or fall as a way of reaching out to others in a non-threatening, safe and natural way. You might be surprised at the outcome!

Goads and Nails

By Richard Spann

"People are more interested in hearing what God has done for you, than what you have done for God." - Lorne Sanny

— Vol. 3 pages 31-33

Over the last forty years I have heard many speakers from a number of organizations and churches. The messages that have had the greatest impact on my life have been those which focused on what God had done in their lives. Although challenged often by the lives of others as they describe the ministry given to them by the Lord, I cannot always identify with them. At times I am intimidated. After listening to some speakers, I have concluded that they have gifts I do not possess If I would want to see the same things happen in my life that they have experienced, I would not know where to start.

When a person relates what God has done for them, it strikes a familiar cord. We can identify readily with their need, for we have experienced it ourselves. Whether the need was financial, a health issue, a family concern, a troubled relationship, or discouragement, it is something to which we can relate. In sharing a need and describing how God met that need, they are speaking from a position of weakness instead of strength. ... II Corinthians 4:7 states, "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." ...

Paul recognizes the power that is present in weakness and therefore relates in II Corinthians 12:9-10. "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Has the Lord comforted you by a special awareness of His presence, a reminder of one of His promises in the scriptures, by the presence of a friend, or his Mighty Hand to alter your circumstances? As God has comforted us in all our troubles, we need to comfort others by relating to them how God has comforted us. They are more interested in hearing about what God has done for us than in hearing about what we have done for God.

In Christ, Richard Spann

Why are our actions sometimes not consistent with our intentions? Part 1 by David Dennis

“She’s always complaining about what I do, or don’t do!” he told me. His frustration was apparent in the tone of his voice. Both are committed believers. He came to faith in the Lord Jesus as a teenager. She grew up in a non-Christian environment and believed in Jesus for eternal life in her college years. But relationally there were problems. Her husband irritated her. He was messy. He was dependent on her. When would he learn to pick up after himself? As a result she often treated him poorly. He felt disrespected.

She knew the right thing to do, but did not do it. Reminds me of myself. And reminds me of the Apostle Paul who said,

“For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that [it is] good. But now, [it is] no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but [how] to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will [to do], I do not do; but the evil I will not [to do], that I practice.” Romans 7:15-19 NKJV



Why is there a disconnect between my intentions, that which I know to be true, and my actions?

When I was overwhelmed with patients’ needs and requests and there seemingly wasn’t enough time to meet them, my response (usually in my own mind and heart) was one of anger and irritation. Don’t they know that I don’t have time to spend an hour with each person? Don’t they realize I need to get home sometime?

“For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.”

Why is it that sometimes those who know Scripture well, even very well, who love God’s Word and the Author who spoke it, those people are the ones who may not always obey that Word like they should. Why is there a disconnect between our beliefs and our behavior, our intentions and our actions?

Why do Christian leaders sometimes fail and fall? Why do the rest of us ordinary people sometimes fail and fall?

That question has haunted me for years. Why is it that even though we read and study God’s Word, our behavior isn’t always “Christ-like.” Sometimes it is very un-Christlike, in fact.

This is easy to see in others, isn’t it? We see marriages hurting, where the ones we love the most are sometimes the very same people upon whom our wrath is poured. We lash out. We are irritated. We are short-tempered. Why is that? What can we do to change? Is it up to us or the Holy Spirit? (spoiler alert: It’s both!)

We’ll look at some root causes of this “disconnect” in next month’s newsletter, and finally suggest some ideas on how we can grow in this area. **To be continued next month ...**

“In this passage [1 Peter 5:5-6] the Apostle Peter admonishes us to be clothed with humility. I was recently told an interesting thing about the Apostle’s choice of words here. When he says, “be clothed” he uses a word that is only used once in the New Testament; right here. It is the word for the slave’s white apron that was tied around them to distinguish them from free men. It was the mark of servitude.”

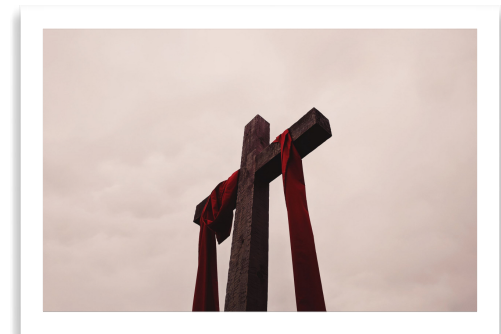
—LeRoy Eims, longtime Navigator disciplinemaker, speaker and leader. This quote found at <http://discipleshiplibrary.com/pdfs/TMS52S.pdf>

“If the Mind is Closed ...” excerpt taken from complete blog found at: <https://kansanavs.org/if-the-mind-is-closed/>

“If the mind is closed, we can speak to the heart.” — John Ridgway

We were created in the image of God with an intellect (mind), a will and emotions. The function of the mind was to perceive truth as it is related to God; the will would then respond in obedience and the emotions would rejoice in that decision. In our fallen state of rebellion that we inherited from Adam, the order is typically reversed. Our emotions govern our will, with the mind (intellect) serving only to justify the faulty decision of the will. II Corinthians 4:4 tells us that “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” Ephesians 4:18 relates to us that our “understanding” is darkened. G. Campbell Morgan characterized this darkened understanding as “Intellectual limitation secondary to spiritual dullness resulting from moral failure.” The only hope for our failure is found in II Corinthians 4:6 where it states “For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” ...

John Ridgway, a Navigator missionary who served in India and Indonesia, related a story several years ago in which a relative of his had a closed mind to the gospel. John’s words, and those of others had been fruitless for an extended period of time. Although his relative’s mind was closed to a consideration of the gospel message, John determined that he could still speak to this man’s heart. The need of his heart was simply to experience God’s love. John then began to share some of the portions of the Psalms describing the great love that the Lord had for his relative. These included Psalm 23, 121 and numerous others. The message repeated so often in Psalm 107 is that of God’s love reaching us in many different situations, including those related to our blindness and rebellion. ... As months went by, his relative’s intellectual resistance began to melt away and disappeared. God’s love had penetrated his heart and he subsequently became a follower of Christ.



Over the years I have encountered a number of individuals with a closed mind toward the gospel. One such man had declined over a period of ten years to even look at the Bible together. Several years ago I heard that he had been admitted to the hospital for a surgical procedure. Motivated by John Ridgway’s remarks, I considered speaking to his heart through the Psalms. I brought him a devotional book with daily readings and gave it to him while he was in the hospital. I did not see him again for several months, at which time he related that he enjoyed the book so much that he was reading it morning and evening. Our relationship has now developed to a point where we are discussing the gospel message freely. The Lord had spoken to his mind through his heart. ...

Although there are a number of authors who speak decisively about many doctrinal and apologetic positions, I have never ceased to rely ultimately upon bringing individuals face to face with Christ in the gospels. Despite intellectual limitation, spiritual dullness and moral failure, mankind universally suffers from weariness and burdens. It is only as they consider the person of Christ that they hear Him say, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30) ...

As you share His love with others, my prayer for you is what Paul prayed for the Thessalonians. “With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.” (II Thessalonians 1:11)

In Christ, Richard Spann

“There is no higher calling or greater privilege known to man than being involved in helping fulfill the Great Commission.”

— Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, now called Cru. This quote found at https://www.azquotes.com/author/44242-Bill_Bright