

Campus Chronicles

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Trinity Life Bible College
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TLBC Women's Fellowship

Let's fellowship together Ladies: Tuesday, April 15th, at 12:30 PM. Bring your lunch and enjoy a time of sharing, laughter and prayer with other students and your Dean of Women, Professor Tana Colburn.

Individual Highlights:

The Art of Active Listening, Part 2 in a Series, ... page 3

The Challenge of Evil: Evil as Existence, by Andrew Johnson Based on Unspeakable, by Os Guinness

The response to evil and suffering in the Eastern family of faiths can be summed up in one word: *detachment*. Illustrating this, Guinness begins his treatment of the Eastern response to evil with the story of Siddhartha Gautama, also known as the Buddha. Siddhartha's father had "surrounded him with every conceivable pleasure and shielded him from all sorrow and suffering." His intention was that his son "should not know that there was evil in the world." However, three things "tore holes in the naïveté woven so assiduously (i.e. very carefully) by his father." These

experiences led Siddhartha on a journey that led him to abandon his wife and son in the middle of night as well as the lofty position as "ruler over four continents and two thousand islands." Siddhartha is said to have ridden a path "from privilege to disillusionment, to asceticism (i.e. self-denial), and finally to enlightenment."

In Buddhism the enlightened person understands that evil and suffering are a normal part of life. The first of Buddha's "Four Noble Truths" is the concept of *dukkha*, or affliction. This, "[a]s the majority of...

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Utilizing Kingdom Resources, by Robin Sady

Jesus died for the sins of the world. He did not die for most, several or some. He died for all. When He suffered on the cross, He did not have only a few hundred or a few thousand on His mind. What held Him to that tree was every single man, woman, boy and girl who would ever live on this planet. Is our own directive the same?

Many churches would be quite satisfied if they could just reach a few hundred from their community.

Think about it, if your church directly affected 300-500 souls on a weekly basis, would you be satisfied?

We've got to stop thinking small. Jesus did not think small. The scripture does not speak small. This gospel was given that every single person ever conceived could have a relationship with Him. For too long the church's growth has been limited by our small thinking.

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Kingdom Resources, *continued from page 1*



There are well over 6 billion people on this planet today. Some would say, "God will add to the church in His time," that growth will happen when He wills it to happen. Jesus proved his commitment and desire to see every person in our city saved when he suffered that horrific beating and the cruel death of the cross.

Revival is God's will; however, revival only happens when his people truly desire it and are ready. You could then say that revival has little to do with God's will. [He has proven His will.] It has to do with Christians [us] putting themselves [ourselves] in a position to allow it to happen, then to receive and maintain it when it comes.

The scriptures tell us, Jesus told a parable of a certain ruler who, when going on a journey, left resources with his servants to invest. Two of the three servants worked with those resources and did all they could to cause growth. The third man hid his resources and as a result had no growth, which caused his master to punish him severely. The other two on the other hand caused their master's resources to multiply. For this, their master rewarded them with a greater amount of resources to work with and his blessings. I believe that through this passage, God is telling us to use our resources to grow His church.

The kind of revival that our Lord wants to see happen in this world may not happen if we keep

doing what we've been doing. There is a growing realization that our Lord is getting ready to do something incredible in this world. However, many of our churches are not positioned to maintain the kind of revival He wants to give. Think about it. What would happen should the Lord give your church 1,000 new people in the next year? We say that will never happen and maybe that's why it never happens. I believe God is eager to give this kind of revival--soon.

I will conclude with this question: Why is it that some churches are having incredible growth? With little emphasis on Bible truths, some churches are seeing incredible growth and are able to maintain that growth to a large degree. Some might say that it is a "watered down doctrine" or a lack of standards that draws and keeps people in these churches. Is it possible; however, that they have tapped into a hidden resource that the early Apostolics understood? Doing what came naturally to them, these early Apostolics met in each other's homes daily to pray, share the Word, eat and fellowship together. **They had a genuine concern for each other's welfare and fostered a constant state of fellowship.**

Their actions turned the world upside down. I think the world is primed for another such 'shake up.' Don't you?



"What would happen should the Lord give your church 1,000 new people in the next year?"



The Art of Active Listening: Part 2, by Priscilla Marshall

In last week's article we learned that listening is an act of love and loving others is commanded by God. To be listened to is desired by everyone. Some of the elements of active listening are to restate what the person has said to demonstrate understanding. Listen, not just to the person's words, but for what feelings they are expressing. Asking the person open-ended questions, will

give them a true opportunity to express their emotions and position. Validate the person's feelings. Let them know they have the right to their emotions. Then, be sure you ask for permission before offering any suggestions. Sometimes a person is not looking for advice, but just an "ear" and a "shoulder."

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Evil and Existence, *continued from page 1*

...Buddhists see it...establishes the human problem—affliction and suffering." The Second Noble Truth "points to its cause—craving, desire, or attachment." The third "highlights the way to overcome suffering through containment, or extinguishing desire."

Even more perplexing to the Western mindset is the "dominant tradition of Hinduism" expressed in the thought of ninth century Hindu philosopher Shankara. The "final reality in the universe is the 'undifferentiated impersonal'" and the universe and all that goes on in it is just the dream of this "impersonal" (God or Brahman). In other words, "the relationship of God to the world is that of a dreamer to his dream." Only the dreamer (or the "true self") is real while his dream is an illusion in which God has deluded himself into thinking that he is something he is not.

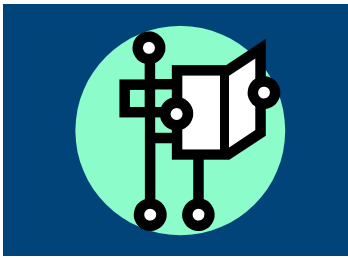
In both Buddhism and Hinduism, the answer to evil and suffering is not to be found in the world. The answer to evil and suffering is to detach one's self and become the "not self." Guinness quotes philosopher Ninian Smart,

who "bluntly" says, "There is Nirvana, but no person who enters it." In the Eastern response to evil there is no concern for human rights or dignity, for "Human rights are an illusion. Inalienable dignity is a conceit." Eastern philosophy does not attempt to remove evil and suffering from existence, since evil is inherent in existence.

Common ground may be established in that both the Eastern family of faiths and biblical faith acknowledge evil and teach self-denial; however, the contrasts between Eastern thought and biblical thought "provide an opportunity to underscore again how differences make a difference." If the Eastern response to evil is right, then "both the Western family and the biblical family are wrong...Both sides cannot be right." In addition, the self-denial taught in the New Testament is not the same as the detachment taught by Eastern faiths as we will examine later.

The next article will consider secular responses to evil and suffering, followed by a look at "the People of the Crossed Sticks."

Differences DO make a difference.



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Listening, *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3*

In this week's article, let's examine some obstacles to listening, as identified by Jennifer Hoffman, MFT at a local conference.

- Fear of loss of self
- * Fear of not being able to quiet our own minds long enough to hear the person before offering feedback or suggestions.
- Unprocessed strong feelings
- A need to fix, rescue, protect, or control the speaker
- Impatience and unwillingness to stop an activity and engage with another's emotions
- Aversion to emotions and fear of feelings and tears
- Having never experienced comfort for yourself

Does this list sound familiar? I would hazard that we all suffer from most of these obstacles. We all desire to have our own voices heard, so it is difficult to stop for a moment and just listen. In discussing these issues, one may become more aware of one's level of listening proficiency. In this way, we may correct our own downfalls.

Sometimes an individual may have strong feelings about a certain subject without even being unaware of the preference. It is those cases, where a person may get on his or her own soapbox and take over a conversation without realizing it.

I know that I have a nature that desires to fix. I want to protect those who are near to me from future harm. This prevents me from really hearing the problem, because in my head I am already concocting ways to get them "out of the mud." I want to decide what their choice shall be, because we all know, "my choice is always the best!" [This is a deliberate sarcasm.]

There are times when someone may need to just talk out a

problem. However, we all lead very busy lives, and don't make time to really listen. I have been guilty of saying, "Keep talking, I can multi-task." Don't get me wrong; there are times when this is acceptable. However, when someone really needs to talk, we need to respect that person enough to stop what we are doing (or make time in the near future) to just listen. Take the person to have coffee, on a walk, or to the park. A very important piece of advice is to pray first. Ask God to close your mouth and open your ears and your heart. Praying is also a great way to open a conversation that may be weighing heavy on one's heart. It allows God to intercede where He needs to, and it allows Him to be a part of the conversation. He has asked us to invite Him in; what better time?

I am going to tie the next two together: aversion to emotions and not having experienced comfort. If we have never experienced someone listening to us, then we may also be uncomfortable with feelings. We may not want to cry, or to get too deep with a person, as we fear that we may gain a connection to them or to their emotion. Talking and listening grow a certain bond between people that they may never have had if they had not decided to invest their time in each other's lives. It may seem really scary, but it is so rewarding to feel close with someone, and it is rewarding to Jesus, our Lord, too! He desires us to build relationships, and that means bonding ourselves to one another and having empathy for each other. Whew, now is that not a great ministry? Wow!

Perhaps you are one of the few who do not need to improve your listening skills, then think of this as a reminder. Next week's article will look at connecting through listening.