

“ENCOUNTERS ~ Road to Emmaus” [11.01.09]

The ‘Evansville Courier & Press’ recently reported:

- About a group of archaeologists in up-state New York who were digging @ a depth of 10 ft late last year & found traces of copper wire dating back @ least 100 yrs.
 - These archaeologists have concluded that their predecessors in up-state New York already had a telephone network more than 100 yrs ago.
- Not to be outdone by archaeologists in the East, a team of archaeologist in northern California set out to find traces of copper wiring in their part of the world; after digging to a depth of 20 ft they also found traces of copper wire dating back @ least 200 yrs.
 - The ‘San Francisco Chronicle’ concluded, “that the early inhabitants of northern California already had a highly advanced communications network @ least a 100 yrs earlier than up-state New York.”
 - This is where it gets interesting:
- A short time later, The ‘Evansville Courier & Press’ reported on a self-taught archaeologist from Bloomfield, IN named Rocky Stone; who after reading these reports, dug a 30 foot hole in his cow pasture & found absolutely nothing.
 - Rocky therefore concluded that 300 yrs earlier, the southern part of Indiana had already gone WIRELESS ☺

We live in a culture that is obsessed with HIGH-SPEED technology that allows us to communicate faster = saving precious time.

Ironically, as advances in telecommunications increase people's ability to communicate, the quality & depth of their interaction is rapidly declining.

This trend is especially noticeable among the younger generation who spends much time ‘speaking’ thru ‘text messaging’ & ‘short blurbs’ on social networking sites.

Based on a Disney Mobile & Harris Interactive survey which tracked the cell phone habits of children & teens ages 10 – 17, they found:

- ‘Text messaging’ is now their primary form of communication & now ranks ahead of actually talking on their cell phones.
- During the summer months, teens spend an average of 3 hrs & 45 min.’s in this form of conversation.

Don’t misunderstand it’s not wrong nor a sin to use ‘Text messaging;’ I periodically ‘TEXT’ in an effort to save time.

For the 1st time, I’m beginning to notice some adverse effects on bldg healthy relationships:

The anonymity of a screen changes how we relate to one another; So much of life is lost thru empty-electronic conversation.

@ best, countless hours are wasted behind electronic gadgets & @ worst, it robs people of the opportunity to interact face to face with friends & family members in real time = real life.

I’m finding that technology doesn’t advance life as God intended; in real time, real life relationships always trump technology!

Today Jesus gives us an old school lesson on how to rediscover the lost art of meaningful conversation = one of life’s most precious gifts.

I. Jesus Encounters (2) of His followers on Road to Emmaus

A. (R) Luke 24: 13 – 16 or p. 807 in your pew Bible

1. Road to Emmaus is 1 of the 2 events that are most recognizable after Jesus was crucified & resurrected to life on the 3rd day.
2. Luke records that after Jesus arose from the dead that Jesus appeared...
 - a. 1st to several women = Mary Magdalene + Joanna + Mary the mother of James, & several other women (24: 10)
 - b. 2nd to these 2 Christ-followers on the Road to Emmaus
 - c. Luke goes on to record in his 2nd book = Acts 1: 3
“During the 40 days after crucifixion He appeared to His apostles from time to time, & He proved to them in many ways that He was actually alive.”
3. What follows next was an unexpected gift = a TEXT BOOK conversation:

Spiritual Conversation = = How to talk about God in everyday life.
OBSERVE how Jesus entered into this conversation:

B. (R) Luke 24: 17 – 19a

1. I'm impressed how Jesus casually enters into this conversation.
 - a. NOTICE He doesn't inject His own personal opinion or His own agenda into the conversation. Instead...
 - b. Jesus asks 2 QUESTIONS in an effort to understand where the 2 men are coming from, He values their input = its important!
2. What's missing in most important conversation is not ANSWERS, but simply GOOD QUESTIONS.
 - a. Ever been guilty of ANSWERING questions no one is asking?
 - b. This happens when we start with our own agenda & do not take time to discover from the person what their real questions are about God.
 - c. [INSERT] Community forum w/Jewish rabbi + Muslim imam
3. Meaningful conversations about the things of God don't produce winners & losers; these important conversations often are open – ended.
 - a. A majority of the time these conversations produce more questions than answers.
 - b. Be encouraged, QUESTIONS allow the person seeking God the ability to discover & decide exactly what they do & do not believe about spiritual matters.
 - c. These are not microwavable conversations that quickly produce instantaneous results; PEOPLE are not brain less robots that are intended to be brain-washed into a specific way of thinking!
4. Most people seeking the truth about God have never been given the opportunity to fully understand what they believe or why they believe.
 - a. Never be afraid or put off by QUESTIONS.
 - b. Used correctly, a persons' questions can be the starting point of a wonderful conversation about the things of God that allows them to discover how magnificent God's love & grace REALLY IS!

The only time that QUESTIONS are not appropriate is when the pilot has come over the intercom & announce that everyone assume the crash position ☺

Otherwise questions are great conversation starters! Taking time to answer questions values the person across from you!

OBSERVE what happens next in the conversation = it's critical!

C. (R) Luke 24: 19b - 24

1. Once Jesus asked the 2 questions He took time JUST to LISTEN to the 2 men's hearts.
2. On a whole, the Christian community is not known for being good listeners.
 - a. Too often we have an agenda when we enter into a conversation:
 - i. We want to convert someone over to our way of thinking or make sure we are right @ the cost of 'mutual understanding.'
 - ii. James 1: 19 instructs us, "Be QUICK to listen, SLOW to speak, SLOW to get angry."
 - iii. We want to present the 'plan of salvation' = great thing if done with the right motives, but if we don't take time to talk things over & understand someone questions, our motives get real diluted.
 - b. It takes real courage to listen, misunderstanding can be avoided & healed when people are given the opportunity to express themselves.

Good QUESTIONS +LISTENING w/out distractions often allows:

D. (R) Luke 24: 25 – 27

1. STRAIGHT-TALK = Jesus didn't pull any punches!
2. Jesus is noticeably upset ~ what frustrates Him to the point of calling these 2 disciples = "...You foolish people"
3. Jesus chides them for not believing what they have read in the Holy Bible:
 - a. It's real serious not trusting this book!
 - b. Jesus takes them thru Moses = 1st 5 books of the Pentateuch, then thru all of the prophets, & then from all the scriptures concerning Himself & His role of being the Messiah.
4. Jesus opened up the Hebrew scriptures & explained them:
 - a. (R) Deuteronomy 18: 15 = 5th book in O.T.
 - b. (R) Psalm 2: 7 – 9 or p. 415
 - c. (R) Psalm 16: 8 – 11
 - d. (R) Isaiah 53: 7 – 10 or p. 559 in pew Bible

NOTICE how these 2 men responded to hearing scripture:

E. (R) Luke 24: 28 – 31

1. "...they begged Him to stay."
2. Why do we even risk having a conversation about spiritual matters, because we live in a world that is spiritually hungry & longs to know God differently!

IF you have authentically accepted Christ & you have allowed Him to change you from the INSIDE OUT ~ people will want what you have!

When the conversation has included = Questions + Listening + Straight-Talk; its then you step away & leave the results up to God!

I Corinthians 3: 6, "I planted the seed in your hearts, & Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow."

I'm humbled by what the Holy Spirit did with this conversation; this ENCOUNTER w/JESUS & the 2 disciples from Emmaus

II. Fruit of godly conversation:

A. (R) Luke 24: 32 – 34

B. Context it's now night time - - its (7) miles back to Jerusalem; notice what the men do about their talk with Jesus?

- Hit the road = no need to sleep ~ have to share this GOOD NEWS
- No way were they going to keep this information from their friends & family!