

The Convenience of Impersonal Ministry

It seems so easy to not be a "hands on" disciple of Jesus Christ. The comfort of being a sideline Christian is far too appealing to most church goers. All too often our outreach might be singing the next inspirational (?) song or donating money to the next new charity. Sometimes it could be buying supplies to fill Christmas shoe boxes. These all are important ministries.

We have something far more valuable to invest than money. It's the love of God through Christ the Son. Outreach just doesn't operate on cash, music, material gifts, or Amens. The cement that holds these components together is your personal involvement with those whom you wish to reach in ministry.

Our districts are losing churches. Our United Methodist congregations are shrinking as older congregants die while their numbers aren't being replaced by new believers.

Each Sunday our congregational prayers of concern lift up the lost to the Lord. The Disciple's Prayer invokes God to "give us this day our daily bread" (things that we need to nourish our lives). This prayer presents a question to us: How does God provide to His people? The simple answer is: Usually by His other people.

Half a commitment to Christ is more valuable than no commitment at all, or is it? Are you "all in" for the Lord? Our biblical examples of outreach discipleship are presented as an up front, in your face, personal encounter. There is nothing more inspiring to Christians than to witness a lost soul coming to Christ as a direct result of your having taken the time to share Jesus with them. Tell them His story. Tell them your story. Only you have the ability to tear down the wall that you possibly maintain between yourself and someone who is starving for the love of Jesus Christ.

Have we lost the enthusiasm that once defined the United Methodist Church? The Shawnee Valley District is in dire need of Christian volunteers to reach out to the recently released ex-offenders and their families. The need for volunteers to serve those incarcerated at the state institutions within our district is great as well.

The Kairos and Horizon Prison Ministries have made an enormous impact on society inside and outside of the prison confines. However, there is much more to be done in Jesus' name.

I do believe that Jesus' commands to "go forth and tell" and to "love one another" are a challenge to each disciple, student, and follower. We are to question our commitment to Him as we consider this challenge. Are you "all in" for Jesus?

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