



Pastor Hanke's Blog

October 6, 2019

Spiritual Conversations – Gain A Hearing

Bible Reference: Acts 2:42-47

With school in session for over a month, and with 3 kids old enough to get homework, I am now in the homework routine. Being married to a teacher, I assumed she would take care of the homework duties, but instead Mindy told me how important it was that I help. Some nights are harder than others. I always wondered why homework was important, but helping the kids has taught me an important lesson. While a lot of learning does happen in the classroom, there are still important lessons that happen while doing homework (for both parties). At first my children didn't think I could help them since I am not a teacher, but soon they saw that their time with Dad was great. Granted, I am not as good as Mindy, of course, and at times I am jealous watching how she helps our kids, but I learn from her and I value the input I can have in their lives.

I think we have the same idealism when it comes to church and how people come to faith. Our church body (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) is steeped in education. A downfall of this can be our unwillingness to see the legitimacy of unconventional ways to operate. This has been one of the most powerful parts of our partnership with CFBC (Christ Fellowship Bible Church), seeing how they operate different than us. Coming to know the truth about Jesus is the most humbling thing a person will ever do, and it almost never happens within the walls of a church building. "What about all those altar calls?" you ask. The better question is how did they enter that church in the first place? It is unlikely they got up one morning and said to themselves, "You know that church on Litzsinger Road? Well, I am going to go there this morning." And if they did do that, what conversations did they have beforehand to spark their interest in showing up? We may want to believe that as long as our doors are open people will just come. It's more likely that someone else did the work for us before they came.

What do I mean? The person who enters a church building had a family member or friend already let them know that Jesus has something that the world can't offer. Whatever led them to finally take that advice we only find out after building a relationship with the newcomer. I believe our church body has been really good at being the recipients of the

spiritual conversations of others, which I am very impressed that Lutheran Hour Ministries now recognizes. They are saying we may be well educated Lutherans, but are we good with spiritual conversations? They took time to do the research and come up with resources and tools to help us begin those spiritual conversations outside of the controlled environment of the church. This is what impresses me about CFBC. They look for any way possible to engage people in a spiritual conversation.

The next three weeks will be challenging for us as we work through unconventional methods to engage people in spiritual conversations. There is no “one size fits all” method. You will not walk away saying, “All I have to do is...” Instead I pray that you would be moved to search your life—your day—for those you can engage in conversation. You’ll get some guidance on how to make those conversations intentional. If you feel like most of the people in your life are already Christian, well, you’re not alone. Your challenge, then, will be to ask Jesus to help *you* find the non-Christians He wants *you* to engage. And I do mean *you*, because there is someone out there that Jesus has put in front of *you* to talk to. We believe in the mission that ordinary people are transformed by the saving love of Christ to be extraordinary servants. Here is the key...the person that helps them know the saving love of Jesus...is *you*!

God's Peace,

Pastor Will