

Get to Know Someone Different Than You

CGGC eNews--Vol. 10, No. 17

April 22, 2016

Sometimes, or maybe most of the time, the challenges of this world seem simply overwhelming. I think most of us can identify with the feeling that we're only one person, one church, or one denomination and the problems facing our world are so enormous; it's easy to lose hope.

Racism is alive and well in our world: I was reminded of this on Tuesday evening when the irate individual in front of me at a hotel asked "what color is the owner" to the young lady working the front desk because he was unhappy about something. Sadly, racism is alive and well. Terrorism is alive and well. There are a host of issues and challenges that leave us feeling ill-equipped and outmatched: LGBTQ issues, immigrant issues, political issues and a host of other serious challenges for our world.



We live in a society where our fellow citizens' degree of confidence in organized religion has suffered a serious decline (from 60% in 2007 down to 42% in 2014). People trust the church less than they did just a few years ago. In addition to this, there is a widespread perception (42%) that "people of faith" are part of the problem, not the solution, when it comes to the significant issues and the direction of the country.

So what do we do? We can harp about the good old days when things were better. We can launch into a cultural war with those who find themselves on the opposite side of these important discussions. We can hunker down and hope that Jesus raptures us out of here so we don't have to deal with this anymore.

That's not why He sent us into this world. He's got a mission for us and the world is desperate for a hope that's real.

So how do we start to help address the multiple issues that face our world in a society that's less and less prone to want, desire or appreciate our help or contribution?

Let's start small: get to know someone different than you! Scot McKnight says that "distance demonizes". The farther away I am from someone, the easier it is to demonize them. Do you have any friends from another race? Do you have any friends who weren't born here? Do you have any friends of a different sexual orientation? Do you have any friends on the opposite side of the political spectrum?

Want to help address the issue of racism? Get to know a person of a different race than yourself. Learn to listen to them and learn from them rather than assume you know what it's like to be in their shoes.

Want to help address the issue of immigration and the largest refugee crisis (Syria) in the history of the world? Befriend someone who wasn't born here in the United States. Invite them over for dinner with your family. Get to know them and their family. Listen to their story.

If you're like me, you probably don't have enough friends that are different than you (especially if you're above the age of 40). Where can you start? Reach out to a Republican, reach out to a Democrat, reach out to a person of another race or ethnicity, or reach out to someone who identifies as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered or questioning. Don't try to fix them. Don't try to get them to accept your point of view. Just get to know them, listen to their stories, and honor their dignity as a fellow image bearer of the God who created all of us. Ask Jesus to let His love shine through your life and your relationship.

This isn't rocket science my brothers and sisters, but it isn't easy either. It isn't comfortable and it may not feel safe. You may not be able to fix all the problems of the world, but you can take a step to reach out and build a bridge to someone who is very different from yourself. It will be awkward and uncomfortable, but you can make that step.

Ask God to lead you to someone who isn't like you. Ask God to give you the wisdom to graciously and genuinely engage with someone who is very different from yourself and that through your friendship they might see Jesus at work in you and be drawn to Him.

Elizabethtown First Church of God Seeks Senior Pastor

We the church, at the Elizabethtown 1st Church of God, are trusting God to call a Senior Pastor to lead the ministries based at E1COG for several years to come.

We are seeking a pastor to lead our congregation through our God given goals. We have a heart for outreach and working together to reach the lost within our community.

Our congregation is forward thinking and willing to embrace new ideas to glorify His name. We are praying for someone who will bring us into a deeper fellowship with each other, will encourage us with His Word, and who has a heart for Christ.

E1COG is a part of the Eastern Regional Conference of the Churches of God General Conference and will be looking for a pastor that strives to remain a part of the ERC.





The candidate seeking ministry here would need to be licensed or ordained, and be approved for ministry by the Eastern Regional Conference of the Churches of God General Conference.

If you feel called to send us your information, Please, send a cover letter stating why you feel called here, a current resume, and a letter of testimony about your call and walk with the Lord.

Please send your information to:
Elizabethtown 1st Church of God
c/o Pastor Randy L. Jenkins
144 Market Street
Elizabethtown PA, 17022
or
e-mail to DrJay83@Aol.com.

If you have any questions, please call 717-341-7702 or contact Pastor Richard Miller at 834 Rutts Road, Elizabethtown, PA 17022 or email richnomill@earthlink.net, Phone # 717-471-8235