



September 13, 2020

Weekly Newsletter

The Preacher's Post – *Darin Kennedy*

I was doing some web browsing this week on the word “empathy,” and I found an interesting article in The Journal of the American Medical Association from October 2, 1991, entitled, “The Importance of Empathy as an Interviewing Skill in Medicine.” The article states that, at the time, 85% of patients had tried to find or thought about finding a new doctor in the previous 5 years. At the top of the list for wanting the change was not technical skills but communication skills. When I hear most people today, almost 30 years later, talk about their doctors, I still hear the same critique. A positive critique about a doctor is based on statements like, “She doesn’t seem rushed when I come in,” “He takes the time to really listen to me,” and “She acts as if I know my own body.” A negative critique includes, “I feel like I’m on an assembly line,” “She didn’t act like I knew what I was talking about, and it’s my body,” and “They always ask me the same questions, like they never hear my answers.” Few of us can judge a doctor by their technical skills; indeed, if we knew as much as they do, we would not need them as much. So, we make our personal diagnosis of the doctor’s skills about how they make us feel understood and, in turn, more confident about how well we can fight our maladies. We can logically say that the technical skills are more important, “Who cares how well they listen if they can fix the problem?” but in practice, we want someone who, at a minimum, pretends to care. The article mentioned above defines empathy as, “the capacity to understand what another person is experiencing from within the other person’s frame of reference, i.e., the capacity to place oneself in another’s shoes.”

If we expect empathy from such a relationship based primarily on professional, technical expertise, then we surely need it in our more personal relationships, in all stages of starting, building, and maintaining those relationships. And yet, as much as we need it, empathy seems in short supply. I am not sure of the reason why we struggle with showing

empathy, especially since we desire it so much ourselves. Is it because we think that if we show understanding then we are also showing affirmation for everything someone does or says? Is it because empathy puts us in too vulnerable a place where we lose our ability to defend our opinion or point of view? Is it because empathy for another is in competition for the empathy we expect for ourselves, and we struggle with taking turns? Is it because we feel attacked when someone shares their hurt, as if they are placing the blame on us? Is it because the best thing we think we can do for another person is to correct their wrong thinking and feeling? What keeps us from simply listening to another person, reflecting on what has been said, understanding the place from which another person has spoken, and doing or saying the right thing to bring a blessing of inner healing? Even if we are right and the other is wrong, they will not have the desire the change nor the strength and confidence to change without an empathetic messenger, in the same way people look for new doctors who may prescribe the very same treatment as their old ones simply because the new ones show empathy.

When Jesus met Zacchaeus, the tax collector, the first thing he said was, “I must stay at your house today” (Luke 19:5). Zacchaeus and his friends probably needed some “hard preaching,” the kind that sinners deserve. But Jesus’ act of empathy, showing the acceptance of table fellowship and receiving what Zacchaeus had to offer in the way of hospitality and claiming him once again as a child of Abraham, was the in-road to a revolution in Zacchaeus’ inner being, identity, and life choices. What will it take for you to both literally and metaphorically “stay at someone’s house”?

Look at all those in the story who stayed at a distance and simply complained, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner” (Luke 19:7). They missed out on the revolution of empathy. They could have saved both Zacchaeus and themselves.

Prayer Requests

Roger Cook family – Roger’s mother suffered a massive heart attack this week and passed away. She lived in Texas, **Samantha Pollard’s** cousin (Alison) – is in hospice care and in the final stages of life. She is a young wife and mother of teenagers, **Cheryl Roberts** – recovering from COVID-19 but is feeling better, **Dave Nash** – recovering from COVID-19, **Vickie Sullivan’s** sister (Donna Kinder) – passed away, **Devastation of Hurricanes and Bill and Marlene** as they work with Disaster Relief, **Roger DeLoach’s** sister in law (Colleen DeLoach) – had surgery for a paraoesophageal hernia and seems to be doing well. Please continue to pray, **Lillie Ramage** – has stage 4 pancreatic cancer, **Cathy Eldridge** – has some internal bleeding, **Linda Hyde’s** mother (Willa Dean Haley) – is currently in hospice care, **Marina Belekonnii** – from Ukraine has Hodgkin’s lymphoma, **Jeannie Ewens’s** daughter (Emily) – health problems that have affected her ability to work, **Flora Swartz’s** friend (Joanie Green) - **UPDATE:** the chemo pills were not having the desired effect but they didn’t see the need to start the drip chemo at this time. They are very thankful. But appreciate continued prayers that the chemo pills will provide the desired effect, David Church – **Ben Church’s** brother, **Andy Hester, Joel Morehead, Bruce Keeton, Jurhee Bench, Will Kreisel, Lena Bramlett**



Addison Sullivan is turning 10!!!
Eli Wycoff is turning 19!!!
Zailey Sutton is turning 6!!!
Noah Jones is turning 17!!!

Birthdays: September 13th -19th

Addison Sullivan – 14th
Sherry Owen – 16th
Tammy Walker – 16th
Eli Wycoff – 17th
Noah Jones – 17th
Pete Olas – 17th
Zailey Sutton – 17th

Save the Date!!!

Saturday, October 3 @ 12PM – Baby Shower for Seth and Morgan Walker

We will serve a light lunch as we celebrate the entrance of baby girl Walker. Please RSVP to the church office.

There will be a drive by/drop off option if you would like to shower Morgan with a gift. But don't feel comfortable attending. Drop off will be available from 11:30AM-noon. Seth and Morgan are registered online @ <https://www.babylist.com/marleah15> Or go to www.babylist.com and click on "find registry". Then enter "Seth and Morgan Walker" as the full name.

Ladies' Classes:

Tuesday mornings @ 10AM

1st and 3rd Monday evenings @ 6:30PM

children read a bible on the bed – [Volodimir Kalina](http://Volodimir_Kalina.com) © 123rf.com
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