

EDITORIAL

LEARNING TO LIVE AS WE PRAY

Recently I received a gift from a dear friend living in another country. As I opened the gift, he commented that he wanted me to have something special from his country—something not purchased in the store, but something really meaningful. As I unwrapped the gift, I was delighted to see a beautiful oil painting of the earth. The green and blue colors were vivid and portrayed a living, vibrant orb floating in a sea of brilliant colors. Then my friend told me the “rest of the story.” The artist is a homeless man who each day sets up his easel on the street corner. As people come and go, they stand and watch him paint. Some buy the paintings, others rush hurriedly by. But my friend stopped and bought a painting—for me—because he wanted something meaningful. And it is meaningful. I love the painting and immediately framed it and hung it where I see it often.

I wonder about this gift. What makes it so precious? I wonder about the homeless man. Does he have enough food to eat? Where does he sleep at night? I think of my friend and his heart of love for the homeless man. My friend reached out and made a difference in one life. It seems that God has placed a desire in every human heart to respond to human suffering—giving a human being a sense of dignity even when his life might seem hopeless.

The topic of this issue of JACL is social responsibility. What does it mean for a Christian leader to be socially responsible at this time of earth’s history? What might you expect to find in these pages?

The doctoral leadership program at Andrews University is a competency-based program; we define social responsibility, one of our competencies, in this way: “Leadership understands social systems and is accountable to others and endeavors to see that family, community, and environmental needs are met in local and, as appropriate, in global

fundamentally about relationships with others; this competency focuses on “who” and “what” leadership is responsible for.

Jesus is clear: “Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Matt. 25:40, NKJV). Dan Jackson, in a recent sermon at Pioneer Memorial Church (on the campus of Andrews University), noted that when we are connected to Jesus, we will be planted in the soil of human need. The planting metaphor opens us to a reality of growth, of action, of getting dirty. In Oswald Chambers’ (1992) classic devotional, he wrote that Jesus Christ’s idea of a New Testament saint was “not one who merely proclaims the gospel, but one who becomes broken bread and poured-out wine in the hands of Jesus Christ for the sake of others” (February 25 entry).

In this issue of JACL you’ll find narratives of lives being poured out in response to human need. The interview with Hertrote (Stieg,)] TJ ET BT 10 0 0 10 99.21264842

As this issue came together, I noticed that the articles tended to come in pairs. Schaaf's article would be somewhat incomplete without Jasmine Fraser and Lea Danihelova's article focusing on family—in particular Abraham's family. And Cha's article complements Murdoch's article. So make sure you read these duos together.

Finally, the opening and closing articles harmonize with one another. Gaspar Colón, a long-time advocate, trainer and writer about community-based outreach, opens the issue by presenting a holistic model that links social and salvation aspects together. Our closing article, by Todd Johnson, takes our idea of social responsibility into the realm of social justice and asks the reader to dialogue about the

“Forgive me, God, I have not tried,
But let me live another day
And I will live the way I pray.”

References

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