

**An eLetter to the ceCommunity
from the AGTS Office of Continuing Education
"Connecting Relevant Ministry for a Changing World"
April 2003**

What's Below?

ceLines - A few words from the ceDirector
ceCommunity - A few updates on your peers
ceLinks - A few web sites you can surf
ceSources - A few tools you can use
ceCourses - A few classes coming your way

ceLines:

A few days ago I had the privilege of sitting in on a seminar with Dr. Stanley Grenz. I highlighted his book, *A Primer on Postmodernism*, in the December 2002 ceLink. If you have not read it, you should. While it is not a particularly "easy" book to read, it is a great resource for understanding postmodernity. Dr. Grenz is one of the leading voices among contemporary theologians providing us with a clearer picture of the implications of postmodernism for the Church. Since most of us in professional ministry have a tendency to "react" against postmodernity, I was very encouraged to hear Stan make a case for embracing the positive values that it can bring to our relationship with God. There are four primary values that do so:

1) A more holistic view of humanity that brings a necessary balance to the over-emphasis upon our rational faculties. Feelings and passions now have a seat at the table that was once reserved for the intelligentsia. While a mind is a terrible thing to waste, it is surely wasted if it excludes the heart from the process of knowing God. His wonder and his mystery will become adventures to be embraced, rather than puzzles to be figured out.

What strikes me as particularly peculiar is that I sit here at my desk writing these words to an audience of Pentecostal ministers. Should I even have to make this point? YES...I guess I do; at least to remind us not to place too much confidence in our own rational abilities. It will take more than reason to navigate our way through a journey that is as much supernatural as it is natural.

2) A celebration of diversity that appreciates the unique qualities of every person or culture. This moves us away from our sinful tendencies to homogenize our world into normative centers that look, think, act, and feel the same way that we do. If the Apostle Paul reminds the Church of anything, it is that we are intended by God to be a wonderfully diverse community blended together in spiritual unity by the presence and power of the Spirit.

3) A move away from the American ideal of the autonomous individual toward a "persons-in-relationship" community. Most of us still find our identity in our personal passions, skills, goals, or experiences. While these are identifiers, they do not ultimately define what it means to be persons in relationship with our God, our church, or our world.

4) A passionate quest for authentic spirituality that pushes aside the tendency to order life around our natural, material, or mechanical environments. The accumulation of the "things" of creature comforts consume us, including the fanciful, yet unnecessary "must haves" that make media moguls their seven figure salaries. Is it any wonder that our culture is turning away from the local church toward quasi-spirituality? If we have the "authentic" Spirit of God at work among us, what is there about his presence that isn't compelling enough to draw pre-Christian people into relationship with him?

Think about these values, and challenge your mind and heart to open to the possibility that these postmodern "heresies" may in fact be what the Father has been hungry to see in his children for a long time now.

If you have any thoughts or comments related to this, please drop me a line. I'd love to hear from you.

Until next time...

I wish you well,
Randy C. Walls, Director
AGTS Continuing Education

ceLinks:

Check out these web sites!

<http://www.meetup.com/> is just about the "coolest" (that's "kewlest" for all the bloggers) website I've seen in a long time. It's an online portal for connecting with all kinds of people, cultures, tastes, and spiritualities. If you're interested in getting an "up close and personal" view of contemporary culture, this is the site for you.

<http://www.thefuturechurch.com/> is a great interactive website based upon Dr. Jim Wilson's book of the same name (see ceSources). The site uses a flash program to show you how to align your church's ministry to the 7 "fulcrum" points of Jim's book.

ceSources:

Books you can count on!!!

Future Church: Ministry in a Post-Seeker Age by Jim Wilson. Some churches criticize culture, others adapt to it, attempting to be culturally relevant, Future Churches don't do either of those things-they leverage culture to the gospel's advantage. In Future Church, Jim Wilson presents 7 Fulcrum Points that will give churches real leverage in today's culture. These 7 Fulcrum Points are illustrated in real-life settings, as Wilson takes us on visits to churches that are utilizing them. This is the way of ministry in a post-seeker age. This is Future Church!

The State of the Church: 2002 by George Barna. This book is the result of the statistical surveys that the Barna Research Group performed in 2002. It charts the religious beliefs and practices of Americans. Section three focuses particularly on youth culture, the different "flavors" of Christianity, and Protestant congregations. Barna closes the book with a challenge to the church in light of the cultural realities of our nation.

Just contact Arlene Dilley in our bookstore at adilley@agts.edu and she'll have them delivered to your front door. FYI: You will need to order the Barna book directly from the BRG website.

ceCourses:

A Full Slate of Courses for All of Your ceNeeds!

Meet us in Washington DC on July 28-29 for a great Leadership Roundtable Discussion with Leonard Sweet. This pre-General Council seminar is only \$75 if you register by July 1, 2003 (postmark date). If you want to pick up some credits on the side, we have a 2 or 3 credit hour option for seminar participants. Registration fee waived. Use this link to register: http://www.agts.edu/conferences/roundtable_2003july/roundtable_july2003.html.

AGTS Branch in Springfield, MO

May 5-9
PTHM 545
Ministry Development Seminar (3 Credits)
Bradford/Taylor/Walls
1-5 pm, 6-10 pm

May 12-16
PCPM 629
Counseling with Special Populations (3 Credits)
Johan Mostert
1-5 pm, 6-10 pm

May 22-27
MCSE 639
Inter-Cultural Urban Ministries: Field Trip to Chicago (3 Credits) Closed due to enrollment limits
Mark Hausfeld

Seminar Schedule

June 9-13
BTHM 640
The Charismatic Theology of Luke/Acts (3 Credits)
Roger Stronstad
1-5 pm, 6-10 pm

June 30-July 11
MCS 639
Children's Ministries in a Multicultural World (3 Credits)
Bruce Braithwaite
8 am - Noon

July 21-25
MHTM 640
Theology of Mission (3 Credits)
Jim Bennett
8 am - 5 pm

July 28-29-Pre-General Council Seminar
PTHM 640
Ministry on the Edge: The Mission to Post-Christian America (2 or 3 Credits)
Leonard Sweet
28 - 6-9 pm
29 - 9 am - 3 pm

NCU Branch in Minneapolis, MN

May 19-23
PTHB 625
Effective Leadership: Managing Change (3 Credits)
Carolyn Tennant
8am - 5 pm

June 2-6
MCSB 639
Special Intercultural Studies: Race and the Modern Church (3 Credits)
Curtiss DeYoung
8am - 5pm

June 9-13
PCPB 643
Marital & Family Therapy (3 Credits)
Angela Reid
8am - 5 pm

NC Extension in Kirkland, WA

September 22-26
(Fall Semester)
PTHE 640
Equipping and Releasing Ministry into the Marketplace
(2 Credits)
Tony Cervero
Monday 1-3, T-F 8am-Noon

September 22-26
(Fall Semester)
THEE 639/
HISE 642
Studies in Christian Thought (2 Credits)

Waldemar Kowalski
Monday 3-5, T-F 1-5pm

SC Branch in Lakeland, FL

May 3-10
PTHB 650
Building a Disciple-Making Ministry (3 Credits)
Wayne Lee
8 am - 5 pm

July 12-19
PTHB 625
Effective Leadership (3 Credits)
Sam Hemby
8 am - 5 pm

August 2-9 (Fall Sem.)
PTHB 626
Conflict Resolution (3 Credits)
David Boyd
8 am - 5 pm

VFCC Branch in Phoenixville, PA

May 12-17
THEB 639
Pastoral Responses to Bio-Ethical Decision Making (3 Credits)
Bruce Marino/
Todd Guevin
9 am - 6:30 pm

June 2-6
BTHB 632
Biblical Theology of Signs & Wonders (3 Credits)
Ben Aker
9 am - 6:30 pm

August 11-15 (Fall Sem)
BIBB 532
Hermeneutics (3 Credits)
David Dippold
9 am - 6:30 pm

Network Partners

AGHM

June 16-28 @ AGTS (Chi Alpha)
Reach the U
Earl Creps
Seminar Schedule

June 19-23 @ AGTS (Chi Alpha)
Reach the U for Church Staff
Earl Creps
Seminar Schedule

Various Dates @ Various Districts
Church Planting Boot Camps
Jay Taylor
Seminar Schedule

AGWM

June 14-July 4 @ Evangel University
Pre-Field Orientation
TBA
Seminar Schedule

June 30-July 3 @ Evangel University
PFO - Ministering in a Pluralistic Society
Earl Creps/Byron Klaus
Seminar Schedule

June 30-July 3 @ Evangel University
PFO - Ministering in a Hindu Context
TBA
Seminar Schedule

June 30-July 3 @ Evangel University
PFO - Ministering in a Buddhist Context
TBA
Seminar Schedule

June 30-July 3 @ Evangel University
PFO - Ministering in a Orthodox Church Context
TBA
Seminar Schedule

June 30-July 3 @ Evangel University
PFO - Ministering in a Roman Catholic Context
TBA
Seminar Schedule

June 30-July 3 @ Evangel University
CMM/PFO - Introduction to Islam
Jim Bennett
Seminar Schedule

July 8-17 @ Evangel University
School of Missions
TBA
Seminar Schedule

July 21-25 @ AGTS
Facultad - Teología Práctica
Luis YÉpez
Monday 1-3 pm
T-F 8 am - Noon

July 21-25 @ AGTS
Facultad - Corrientes Teológicas Actuales
Everett Ward
Monday 3-5 pm
T-F 1-5 pm

Districts

Illinois - May 19 @ Peoria
District Council Seminar - Pastor-Staff Relations
Rick Ross/Troy Jones
1-4 pm

Rocky Mountain - May 6-9 @ Ft. Collins
District Council Seminars

TBA
Seminar Schedule

Southern Missouri - May 15 @ District Office
Ministerial Enhancement Seminar: Financial Planning
AGFSG Staff
Seminar Schedule

Montana - July 7-11 @ Glacier Bible Camp
Leader as Communicator
Mark Rutland
Seminar Schedule

Contact us 8am - 4:30pm CST at:
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If you prefer to not receive this eLetter, please send an e-mail to mgalloway@agts.edu.