



DAVID ASSCHERICK
co-director

LISTEN FOR THE BEAUTY

JUST THE OTHER DAY, while on my morning run, I had a rather sublime revelation. I get these “running revelations” quite a bit actually. Maybe it’s the increased blood flow, or the quiet time, or the aloneness of it all, I really don’t know. Whatever it is, I like it. Perhaps I’ll write more about these running revelations sometime, but for now I want to share with you one in particular that God showed me earlier this week.

The setting was at the Unity in Ministry Conference in Washington, DC. The timing of the conference, for me, could hardly have been worse. I’d just returned from a lengthy trip to New Zealand and Australia. My nights were days and my days were nights. Now I’m an eight-hour-a-night guy. Sure, I can survive on less, but I cannot thrive on less. So imagine how I was feeling when my hours of sleep per night, while at the conference, were four, six, zero, and four, respectively.

My lack of sleep put my whole body in a kind of indescribable and fuzzy haze, not exactly a state of mind and body conducive to deep thinking and meaningful interactions. I was blasted both physically and emotionally. After a particularly sleepless night (the zero-hour-night mentioned above), the sun rose and I suddenly, oddly, felt a little energized. What to do? What else? Go for a run!

“I ASKED JESUS TO TEACH ME SOMETHING, ANYTHING.”

An early morning run after a sleepless night might seem like a strange idea, but, as it turns out, it was just what I needed.

The crisp air burned my lungs and awoke me from my haze. The early morning sun was glorious and golden, a photographer’s dream, light dancing through the green of the leaves. There was no wind, and the scene just dripped an Edenic stillness and contentedness. As I ran, I breathed deeply and intentionally,

waking with every stride.

I began, as I often do while running, to pray. I asked Jesus to teach me something, anything. I should add that at this point the Unity Conference was hardly unified. I had found this troubling and was struggling somewhat to make sense of the diversity of perspectives and opinions.

Then it happened.

A Chestnut-sided Warbler sang lustily while I passed through a grove of particularly beautiful trees. Then the Yellow

Warbler did the same, followed by the Brown Thrasher and the Wood Thrush and the Catbird and more besides. The calls were profoundly beautiful, more beautiful than I ever remembered them being.

Then it dawned on me.

Their calls, though beautiful, were different, diverse, and distinct. Each had something to say. There was harmony, unity even, but not uniformity. Quite suddenly, I had a whole new take on the Unity

continued on page 4...



JEFFREY ROSARIO
speaker

IN PRAISE OF SIMPLE THINGS

LAST FRIDAY, I WAS out of the country at a conference in Spain. My wife, Marianna, was driving to Portland with her brother and little sister. She noticed the steering was funny and then realized she had a flat tire. She randomly pulled into the first side street she saw and found herself in front of a mechanic shop.

But it was 7 p.m. on a Friday and the shop was already closed. The two mechanics inside had just finished sweeping and mopping the floor from a long day's work. "Sorry, we're closed," said one of them. But then the other mechanic said, "I'll fix it for you." The other one whispered to him, "But we're closed." "I'll do it for free," he said. My wife was totally surprised.

I know it seems so small and simple. But that's the point. That

act of kindness lit her up. That man had no idea what was going on in her life. He knew nothing of the burdens she'd been shouldering that week. His act of kindness was a godsend, literally.

That experience reminds me of the simplicity of the gospel. It's practical. It finds its clearest expression in the small, simple things. And those small, simple gestures often have big, far reaching effects.

We don't know the burdens that are on the hearts of those that surround us daily. A simple gesture can go a long way.

KEEP IT SPONTANEOUS

According to the New Testament, cultivating an awareness of the practical needs of those around us is

among the most basic virtues of the Christian's experience. Jesus made a big deal about this in Matthew 25:31-46. It's a pretty dramatic vision of the end of the world when the Son of Man is sitting on His throne and the whole world is summoned before Him.

"I'LL DO IT FOR FREE,' HE SAID. MY WIFE WAS TOTALLY SURPRISED."

At that time there are only two categories of people: the sheep and the goats. This is the moment of truth when everyone's true colors are shown. Christ tells the sheep, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (v. 34).

JUST LIKE JESUS

"Connected with Christ, we are connected with our fellow men by the golden links of the chain of love. . . . It will be as natural for us to minister to the needy and suffering as it was for Christ to go about doing good."

- Ellen White

IF IT'S GOOD, IT'S FROM GOD

"Wherever there is an impulse of love and sympathy, wherever the heart reaches out to bless and uplift others, there is revealed the working of God's Holy Spirit. [Even] in the depths of heathenism . . ."

- Ellen White

MORE THAN A SUGGESTION

"We should anticipate the sorrows, the difficulties, the troubles of others. We should enter into the joys and cares of both high and low, rich and poor. . . . They are members of God's great household, and Christians as His stewards are responsible for them."

- Ellen White

Along with this awesome invitation, they are given the reason they received it:

I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me (Matthew 25:35-36).

“... CULTIVATING AN AWARENESS OF THE PRACTICAL NEEDS OF THOSE AROUND US IS AMONG THE MOST BASIC VIRTUES OF THE CHRISTIAN’S EXPERIENCE.”

The reaction of the righteous is worth noting. “What?” they say, “When did we do all those things to you?” You can almost see the confusion on their faces. I get a sense that if given more time they would have protested and announced that there’d been a mix up of the names and they were mistakenly elected.

But it’s in their confusion that we see the certainty of their qualification. They lived a life of spontaneous compassion and kindness. It was a natural impulse from a heart touched by the love of God. They didn’t have to try; it was merely a gospel induced, knee-jerk reaction. Don’t miss the subtle point Jesus is making: they were unaware that they were getting credit for what they did.

Ellen White chimes in on this theme in *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 384:

Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man

has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by trying to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within. . . .

These righteous souls had demonstrated a sincere encounter

with God by the way they involved themselves in the lives of others. They had passed the test without even knowing they were being graded for it.

In the next scene Jesus replies with those well-known words:

Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least

of these My brethren, you did it to Me (Matthew 25:40).

That’s a beautiful summary of the essence of Christianity. The principles of the kingdom have social implications right here, right now. May God help us to immerse ourselves so deeply in the love of God that we’ll be confused when our deeds of compassion are noted in the afterlife. May the gospel spring forth spontaneously from our words, from the expression on our faces, and from our random acts of kindness!



COME SEE US!

JUNE 3-7

OCI Leadership Retreat
Riverside Farm Institute, Kafue, Zambia
rfi@zamnet.zm
James Rafferty

JUNE 7-8

McDonald Road Adventist Church
McDonald, TN
423.396.3462
Ty Gibson

JUNE 9-15

Luanda, Angola
info@sid.adventist.org
James Rafferty

JUNE 14-22

CROSStraining
Jasper, OR
541.988.3333 / lightbearers.org
Ty Gibson, James Rafferty, David Asscherick
& Jeffrey Rosario

JUNE 20-23

Washington Conference Camp Meeting
Auburn, WA
253.681.6008 / washingtonconference.org
Ty Gibson

JUNE 21

Upper Columbia Camp Meeting
Spangle, WA
509.242.0512 / kathym@uccsda.org
David Asscherick


LIGHT BEARERS

... LISTEN FOR THE BEAUTY *(continued from page 1)*

Conference. Each participant was a child of God. Each was a committed Seventh-day Adventist. Each had a voice. Those voices, though not identical, were important and beautiful, and I needed to hear each voice for the beauty and perspective it was communicating.

I finished my run and made my way to the conference room with a new and better attitude. Jesus had taught me a lesson through His feathery messengers; not only

a lesson for that weekend, but for a lifetime: to listen for the beauty and the harmony, and not expect or desire everyone in the church to say and sing exactly the same thing.

“There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification” (1 Corinthians 14:10, KJV).

Listen, my friend, for the beauty.



A summer soulwinning intensive –

CROSStraining

Biblical. Powerful. Practical. Essential. 9 life-changing days.

ready always be
to give an answer...
1 Peter 3:15

set i am
to give an answer...
Phillipians 1:17

go! ye therefore...
Matthew 28:19

JUNE 14 - 22, 2013
JASPER, OREGON
Space is limited.
lightbearers.org
541.988.3333