

New Roots Review

June 10, 2022

*Longing for Liberation and Meaning. Helped,
and Now Helping.* by Fred Wilgenburg



**NEW ROOTS
MINISTRY**

God provides the best help to the biggest challenges and difficulties faced by people. God, as the Creator and Maintainer, as the Savior, as the Counselor, as the Holy One, as the Word of life, as Eternal Life, and as the Purpose-giver, to offer up a few descriptions of God,heals and fixes, loves and forgives, is present, is just, grants eternal life, and welcomes co-workers. As you consider that list, do you agree that God can provide the most comprehensive help?

If “yes,” and if we have personally received Him, and if we care about others, we would agree that the most important thing we can do is let others know of Him and His goodness, however that is possible and effective. What is “possible” opens this up to countless opportunities. A good starting point is to brainstorm and write down the many things which are possible for you, and to do them. What is also “effective” may limit your list some. . . .

That’s something that I have been especially aware of lately, and in which I am growing, especially as New Roots Ministry works with a very diverse population. Some Native American and First Nations people have a revulsion toward Church, and therefore, sadly, toward Jesus. Much of this stems from their ancestors having suffered abuse at the hands of the Church and its leaders a few generations ago. Those bad experiences have been shared with younger generations so that today, many Natives do not believe. At Smithfield Foods, where I am a chaplain, I sometimes give the book, *One Church, Many Tribes*, written by Lakota Sioux pastor, Richard Twiss, to Native employees as it is helpful to them as it acknowledges the abuses, affirms Natives, and encourages the Gospel, not as the white man’s religion, but as Good News for every person. I seek to follow-up with them after a few weeks to hear their thoughts. I want them to be aware of the truth—God’s Church is full of humans who fail miserably sometimes and who hopefully are in church for God’s help, grace, and forgiveness; we should be sorry, and I am sorry; God does not fail people; instead, He wants to help.

Some of our most recent driver training students are young professionals and graduate students in fields of science, and they are mostly Asian. Through conversation, I have learned that some of these friendly young adults are culturally religious, but mostly secular in their thinking, including about the origins of life. I recently ordered copies of the book, *The Language of God*, by Francis Collins. Collins is highly respected in the science world as the former leader of the Human Genome Project, and presently as the director of the National Institute of Health (NIH). He was an atheist who became a Jesus-follower, and his perspective on the origins of life is as a theistic evolutionist. As another opportunity to see these friends, I will give them copies of the book, and then I will follow-up in a few months again. I want them to at least consider that this universe, and its finer points like tiny genes and DNA, are amazing, which they probably know better than I do, and that an Intelligent Designer is behind it all. I hope they also will consider that, as their colleague, Francis Collins, is aware, He is personal.

Seeking to not only try anything possible to spread news about the greatest Helper, and His Gospel, but also to do it effectively and thoughtfully, has caused me to be more patient—wanting God’s timing, —>



This friend (in the middle with black hair) is a wonderful host who enjoys when I bring groups to her home to eat and learn about her culture. After 5 years of sometimes frustrating conversations, including about our faiths (she is Muslim), I am finally coming to understand what approach may be more helpful for our faith conversations. A slow learner, I’m excited to visit again soon.



Donations are always appreciated!
Gifts can be given through the mail, or through our website—
www.sfnewroots.com/donate/

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guage. I believe God will further shine His goodness into this family, beyond the relationship that we had already established. The worship leader stops in occasionally to practice with the teenager, telling him he hopes he can join the team up front some time.

A young couple had a baby with extensive disabilities. After a few visits, and each time asking if they would like me to bring a pastor of their home country and language, they finally asked that I bring him. He shared with them about God's miraculous healing of his brother years earlier (*the cause for his entire family coming to Jesus*), which led to a good time of visiting and prayer. This couple wants him to visit again.

Teaming-up, and giving relevant books, do not take the place of having a good conversation about God and His Gospel, but they can enhance those interaction-opportunities. In September, we will host a Gospel Conversation Training event for people of the four Nepali churches in Sioux Falls. It was at one of these events that I learned the 3-circles for simply sharing the Gospel, which I probably use weekly—enough so that it has become pretty natural. But, I need to be patient and respectful of the other person's situation, and prayerful for the Spirit's timing, so it isn't agenda-driven and inorganic. A 3-minute, 30-second video at the following link shows real-life use of it if you are interested—>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcj5G_4dwrI. Though we sometimes need to do Gospel conversations on our own, many resources are available to empower and equip us. If you are interested in the materials from our training event, let us know.

A friend sometimes reminds me, "but many know you as a pastor who is of a ministry, so they expect you to talk about God and to offer prayer." He's right. I get many opportunities. But, it doesn't reduce the fact that each of us, as well as all people, and even the creation are "groaning as in the pains of childbirth," perhaps unknowingly, longing to "be liberated from...bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Romans 8). God provides the best help to the biggest challenges and difficulties, and He welcomes us as His co-workers to diligently, patiently, unitedly, and humbly follow His lead. As we watch carefully, the opportunities are everywhere. Enjoy blessing, and being blessed!

We could use volunteers who 1) help people navigate the American system and achieve their goals, and who 2) offer driver training for new Americans (no special experience needed, we won't use your car, safety first). Please text or email if interested.

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and to team-up with others if it would be helpful. A guitar was given to our ministry a few months ago. How fun to finally give it to a teenage acquaintance who is quite musical. It took a while, but a pastor friend introduced us to his young worship leader who gave it with us. He is a guitarist, he is a cooler, younger dude than me, and he speaks the family's first lan-



What is New Roots Ministry?

It's "a springboard for new Americans & their churches." This is done through workplace chaplaincy (we provide chaplaincy at Smithfield Foods & we train & place bi-lingual chaplains on commercial farms), through Timothy Leadership Training, through hosting special educational events, through empowering new American pastors, leaders, and their churches, through offering unique Service Opportunities—serve in, or visit, stores owned by new Americans, then hear their stories, through helping people navigate the American system and achieve their goals, like education, and through driver training for new Americans.

