

REConcile

Mending Broken Relationships

Volume 9 / Number 2

—A Decade of Help and Hope —

Summer 2007

China Anyone?



Shannon Dong

Shannon Dong is Program Counselor for English Language Institute/China. Since 1981 this group has sent Christian educators to teach English throughout China. The current socio-economic climate has given ELIC a chance to expand its efforts. For more information, visit their website at www.elic.org.

rec-on-cile:

1 a: to restore to friendship or harmony

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary



The Office of Reconciliation Ministries (ORM) is an Outreach Ministry of the Worldwide Church of God.

Muslims, Christians Meet in California



Easter service participants
(Dr. Biswas is third from left.)

Loma Linda, CA: In April the Bengali Evangelical Association (BEA), a ministry ally of Office of Reconciliation Ministries (ORM), sponsored a special celebration Easter service for 580 people, most of whom were Muslims. "For the past few years, Dr. John Biswas, a native Bengali who heads BEA and is also an ordained minister, has been hosting a small monthly prayer group for Bengali immigrants in Los Angeles," commented Roger Lippross, BEA chairman and ORM advisory editor. Many Bengalis encouraged Dr. Biswas to host a larger, ecumenical event and Easter, 2007, seemed an ideal occasion.

Dr. Biswas stressed in his Easter message that Jesus Christ died not just for Christians but for Muslims and all people. What made this event so effective was that the audience got to hear the gospel in their own language — Bengali. "Shades of the day of Pentecost and just the sort of thing we need to be doing all across America, all across the world," said one pastor. According to Roger Lippross, other events are planned for the future.



BEA at work: The newly constructed Herman L. Hoeh Community Center in Bangladesh also serves as a tsunami shelter and disaster relief center.

Our Readers Respond...



Dear Mr. May,

Thank you very much for your informative letter. Since "Amazing Grace" is my favorite song and I always wondered who wrote those beautiful words and the music to it, now I know all about it. Also, about the slave trade in the U.S. and the money America makes from it. I am ashamed over that and am sure that most people don't know what is going on in this already cruel world. To show love to people - our neighbors - sometimes only takes a smile. Thank you for the work you are doing.

Sincerely,
Gerda Bludau
Pasadena, CA

Hi Curtis,

Thank you for coming to our services and speaking. I mentioned to you that I was working on forgiveness and it would be so much easier if they would say they are sorry. Last week I was watching Christian television and Marcus Lamb was speaking on forgiveness. He took it as an opportunity to apologize for the wrongs committed and not apologized for by fathers, sons, mothers, daughters, husbands, employers, etc. - each group individually - and I had a good cry and feel I can move forward. That "I'm sorry" really does help.

Your sister in Christ,
Carol Lindsley
Mulkiteo, WA

Dear ORM,

The enclosed check was raised through a fundraiser Living Hope Christian Fellowship sponsored during Black History Month. Please accept this offering to help support ORM efforts to heal hearts and bring reconciliation.

Pastor Lloyd Briggie
Washington, D.C.

Dear ORM,

God is so merciful that I'm able to participate in your program and I'm hoping and praying that one day I'll be able to attend one of your conferences.

Thank you,
Linda Carter
San Diego, CA

Greetings,

As Carlton Green said in his last visit with us..."May good things fall into your laps. May this be a year of growth and accomplishment. May God's name be glorified in your works through Him." I pray that you and Jannice will be encouraged and be encouraging to everyone in your path.

Your brother in Christ,
Bob Stringer
Lompoc, CA

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FROM THE DIRECTOR...



ORM Director,
Curtis May

"Apology Accepted"

Don Imus touched a raw nerve in his negative characterization of the women on the Rutgers University basketball team. The good news was that he later apologized to them in person and the apology was accepted. Coach Vivian Stringer said, "We, the Rutgers University basketball team, accept Mr. Imus' apology and we are in the process of forgiving."

Apologies are very much a part of the work of ORM. It helps to advance healing and reconciliation.

In March of this year, I had the opportunity to join the modern-day abolitionist march, "Walk of Witness", which originated at William Wilberforce's home in Hull (northeast England) and ended in Westminster. As a descendent of slaves, the apology touched me deeply. More deeply than I had imagined. And if I had not already forgiven those who owned some of my ancestors (which I had), I can't imagine not accepting this sincere apology. I gladly accepted, as did the black Archbishop of York, Dr. John Sentamu.

Our friends in the Lifeline Expedition have been involved with this for seven years. They have focused on major slave-trading cities along the Atlantic seaboard on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Apologies have been offered and accepted. In Richmond, Virginia, a man from Holland said, "I have walked the world to ask for forgiveness," before breaking down. He was consoled by two African-American pastors. One lady said, "I feel that not only as a white person but as someone who is a descendant of a member of the KKK, that I'm in the right position to say, 'Yes, it was wrong,' and we need to do more than we're doing now."

Most touchingly, thirteen-year-old Jacob Lienau gave a tearful apology: "I should apologize for the children that were taken from their mothers, all the boys and girls that were taken from their homes and put on ships." Joseph Zitseme from the Cameroons said, "On behalf of Africa, to my African brothers and sisters, forgive us for betraying you and sending you to foreign lands." All these apologies were accepted. Some stated that it changed their life. With God's help and blessing, may the changes continue.



Newsweek magazine
April 23, 2007

“Difficult People at Work:” the Antidote

Most conflicts people experience, especially in the Western world, are the day-in, day-out people problems at work.

Managers know that 85% of their success comes from the ability to deal with the staff, the office team. What John D. Rockefeller said more than 100 years ago is still true: “I’ll pay more for the ability to work with people than any other ability under the sun.”

In their helpful little book, *Difficult People at Work: How to Cope, How to Win*, authors Arthur H. Bell and Dayle M. Smith report that many companies typically invest 90% of a new employee’s first year salary in hiring and training. This means that a bad “fit” on the job not only torpedoes office morale but is also a severe blow to the company’s bottom line. In other words, it pays to know how to handle difficult people.

“The Dirty Dozen”

Bell and Smith identify the “Dirty Dozen,” the twelve unfortunate personality types people may have to work with:

- The Backstabber
- The Liar
- The Blamer
- The Short Fuse
- The “Yes, but”
- The Busybody
- The Politician
- The Silent Martyr
- The Bitter Recluse
- The “Voice in the Wilderness”
- The “One True Friend”
- The “Star Chamber”

Across 119 pages of text the authors outline how to deal with these impediments. The Busybody and the Politician are almost omnipresent. Others are hard to summarize, such as the “Star Chamber,” named after a 1500s English high court that terrorized the realm. In some companies these people “form a secretive clique that criticizes more than it contributes” (page 79). They constitute a judgmental “silent minority” who think alike and can be real impediments to creative change.

Bell and Smith advise trying to smoke them out in regular worker or staff planning meetings. In focus groups or smaller task forces, the super critics can be separated from and isolated from their cliques. In this more manageable setting, the manager or team leader can ask them (diplomatically) to come up with hard objections rather than personal trivia or chronic foot-dragging.

This will “call their bluff” but in a discreet, professional environment. As the authors say, even some of the Star Chamber will feel encouraged when they sense that they do have positive contributions to make. The positive approach is to help them learn to feel more part of a bigger team that is accomplishing constructive, worthy goals.

“Creative Listening”

This one-two punch of “identify problem/find solution” makes *Difficult People* a helpful and practical read.



The third chapter is titled “Active Listening.” This is not often stressed in “how to” books on difficult people. In other words, the leader or foreman’s own attitude is often not addressed. Anger is the most common reaction to the stresses other people bring to bear on bosses, and it is never the best reaction.

Former Chrysler executive and author Lee Iacocca had to face his own anger: “I was full of anger, and I had a simple choice: I could turn that

anger against myself with disastrous results or take some of that energy and try to do something productive” (page 41).

Effective Tactics

The Backstabber often needs some concentrated attention to smoke out. Schedule brown-bag lunches with your team, try to build team spirit, advise the authors. Check out derogatory gossip quickly and privately. Outline career goals and review corporate culture with the person you have correctly identified. Positively hold out the proverbial right hand of fellowship. Give them a chance to prove they still want to be part of the team. If they have to be dismissed, at least the office staff will know that the boss took the time to try and make things work.

The “Yes, but-er” can be handled by having him or her write out their objections in a carefully crafted memo or e-mail. “The act of writing requires that half-baked thoughts be filled out into sentences and then structured into a cogent argument with evidence and recommendations” (page 57). What about Short Fuses and Blamers? They can be outflanked at meetings by the manager asking, “Does anybody else feel that way?” If you have a smoothly functioning team, others will come to your aid and the point will be noted, even by the Silent Martyr and the Bitter Recluse. Above all, regular displays of genuine concern and appreciation can work wonders. Nothing succeeds like sincerity.

Attitude vs. Trickery

Bell and Smith could have stressed the cardinal point that the boss’ attitude matters more than technique. Simply learning a crafty “bag of tricks” won’t work. People can usually spot when they’re being manipulated. Managers beware: Employees can detect the difference between genuine concern for them, the firm or factory and corporate “phony baloney.” This is truer after the Enron scandal and other corporate debacles.

(Continued on page 8)

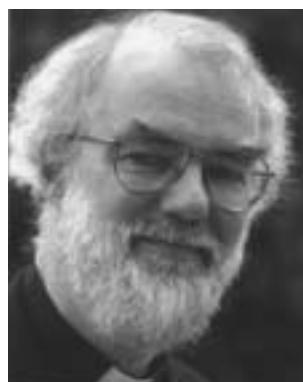
Walking for Healing: “It Happen

London, England: It was a time not quite like any other in the proud old capital's history.

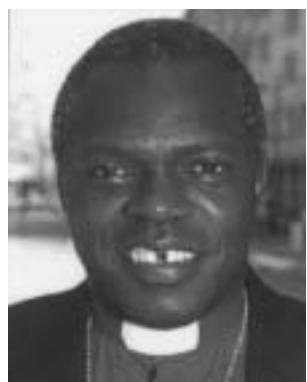
London – where Edmund Burke pleaded the cause of American independence and where William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson and others conducted their uphill crusade against slavery. London – capital of the world's last great empire – on March 24 became the home of shuffling feet and ardent marchers recalling the heroic days of the Abolitionist Crusade and bearing witness to the gross indecency of modern slavery (see page 7).

ORM was represented among numerous other groups gathered in Kennington Park to hear Dr. Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, pay tribute to Wilberforce and those earlier Christians who raised a standard for the nations to follow. Great Britain abolished slavery finally in 1834, but the 2007 March recalled the first big crack in the edifice: the abolition of the trade in slaves throughout the British possessions in 1807.

So many stories could be told, so many efforts need remembering. Here is a brief pictorial synopsis.



*The Archbishop
of Canterbury,
Dr. Rowan Williams*



*Dr. John Sentamu, the
Anglican Archbishop
of York.*

“Some have said they see no need for the apology made last year by the General Synod for the role the Church played in the slave trade. But (to) acknowledge historic injustices inflicted in the name of the Church, this is a vital part of our life as members of the body of Christ.”

— Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

“An unhealed past imprisons us in the present”



*Kennington Park: Curtis May (left) with Liz Doyle, anti-slavery activist from England, at Archbishop's service.
(Photo by Sid Doyle)*



Anti-slave marchers (left) singing before London's Lord Mayor, His Worship Ken Livingstone (second from right)

In London,” March 24, 2007



Whitehall Place: Walk that began at Wilberforce's home on March 1, ends in London on March 24.

nt and for the future” — Archbishop Rowan Williams



Program from Walk of Witness pilgrim walk



“Onward Christian marchers.” London Bobby escorts pilgrims



Parliamentary Petition: Magazine salutes British abolitionists in “Amazing Grace” movie.

Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth: “Sometimes a hard head helps!”

Cincinnati, OH: Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth visited Christ Community Church to recount a number of stories and testimonies of how God spared him through bombings, beatings and jailings (38 times) during the Civil Rights marches of the 1960s. I think I was most impressed with the depth of his faith and Christ centeredness. You can see that his passion for justice and civil rights flows out of and is an extension of his relationship with Christ.

This is really a humble man that God has used in a powerful way. He continually gives any glory to God. He feels that God was with him whether he survived any particular event or had died. As he said, “when ‘Mr. God’ calls you, you go.”

As a former close associate of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rev. Shuttlesworth was described as “Our strong man in Birmingham.”

I saw in him and heard in his message a “spirit” that is absent from the Civil Rights Movement of today. He was very clear that, in his mind, the movement is different today. What has been lost is a humility and total dependence upon Christ. Civil rights leaders today have politics, the law media, etc. on their side to open doors, and there may be less of a “need” for Christ to open doors. All they had back then was Christ and his full assurance that all men had been created to be free.

I realized in a profound way, hearing Dr. Shuttlesworth, that God has called all of us in one way or the other, to lay down our lives for others. Just as Jesus laid down his life for us that we may be reconciled to God, God calls men and women to lay down their lives for the reconciliation of man to man. Someone “had” to be bruised, broken and bleeding for healing and reconciliation to come. Rev. Shuttlesworth jokingly said that God gave him a hard head to endure the beatings. I think that it is the “spirit” that is missing today. Really it is the Spirit of Christ.

It was great to see how the young people were drawn to him and his message. Several wanted to get their pictures taken with him. I think they were drawn to his grace and genuiness, as indeed we all were.

— George Hart

(George Hart is an ORM Chapter Leader in Cincinnati, Ohio.)



Icons: Rev. Shuttlesworth, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph Abernathy and Andrew Young. Inset: Rev. Shuttlesworth with Curtis May.

Reconciliation Puzzle

by Mary Lou Diehl

Find words from left column in the puzzle and circle. Words can be diagonal or even backwards, but must be in a straight line.

DIVERSITY
EDUCATION
EQUALITY
FELLOWSHIP
FORGIVENESS
FRIENDSHIP
HARMONY
HEALING
LOVE
MERCY
ONE RACE
HUMAN
PEACE
REFORMATION
UNDERSTANDING
UNITY
WARMTH
TOXIC BEHAVIOR
BIGOTRY
CONDEMNATION
HATRED
HYPOCRITICAL
JUDGMENT
SUPERIORITY

G R P I H S W O L L E F E N U
C N O S N C E C A R E N O I N
R S I L U I Y R T O G I B A I
O S T D I P W A R M T H P O T
I E C O N D E M N A T I O N Y
V N H N N A L R M I H S O H T
A E E T A O T R I S H I E A I
H V A Q V M O S D O T G I R S
E I L E U F U N R A R H F M R
B G I T E A E H C E A I E O E
C R N R O I L U E T D R T N V
I O G F R G D I R C C N O Y I
X F D F O E F E T Y A H U I D
O T N E M G D U J Y S E P E A
T C E L A C I T I R C O P Y H

Extra letters spell:
RECONCILIATION IS THE GIFT
OF GOD, OF HIS PEACE!

(Thanks to Mary Diehl for submitting this. Keep those written contributions coming! —Editors)

Slavery: The Modern Curse

Mention the word “slavery” and what comes to mind? Probably Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Or perhaps the long struggle of men and women such as William Wilberforce to end Britain’s transatlantic slave trade in 1807.

Unfortunately, the systematic abuse of human persons bought and sold for the profits of their service – legal and otherwise – is still very much with us. Consider these facts:

- There are 27 million human beings trapped in some form of human trafficking or cruel and abusive labor practices today, half of them children under the age of 18.
- 800,000 human beings are bought, sold or forced across international boundaries for exploitative purposes every year.
- Unscrupulous child labor “employers” abuse an estimated 126 million children around the world.
- In the United States, attorneys from the Department of Justice have prosecuted “slave trade” activities in 91 cities and in nearly every state.
- Between 1998 and 2000, more than 50,000 women and children from Latvia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Thailand, China, Russia and Mexico were brought into the United States to work as sex slaves.

These shocking facts fly in the face of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1956 UN Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery. Slavery has morphed, learning to fly under the radar, but the misery it creates is unchanged. People in poor or war-torn countries are often lured with fake visas and passes into a foreign country by an unscrupulous “employer” who controls them through propaganda, mental or physical abuse, or the threat of being handed over to the authorities.

Modern slaves are not invisible. They could be as close as the back room of your favorite restaurant or the construction site you pass every day.

In August 1995, Californians were shocked to learn of 72 garment workers held for seven years in a roach-infested apartment complex behind a wire fence in a thriving suburb of metropolitan Los Angeles. The workers, mostly women from Thailand, were promised high-paying sewing jobs in the United States. On arrival, their passports were confiscated and they were forced to work

16-hour shifts for 70 cents an hour in a suburban garage with no ventilation and behind shuttered windows. The slaveholders established a commissary where a bar of soap sold for \$20 and a bag of rice for \$10. There was seemingly no escape.

New definitions/old problems

Thanks to an alert citizenry, the Southern California case made the headlines and became a case study in modern slavery – working under mental or physical threats and/or abuse, dehumanization, physical constraint and restriction. Today “bonded labor” is quite common in the twilight zone of human misery. This refers to hapless individuals being conned into taking loans, perhaps to pay for medicine for a sick child.

People sign on to pay the debt and never get out of servitude for the price of food and shelter. David Batstone estimates there are at least 15 million bonded slaves in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

The world refugee crisis has made the problem worse. European Union agents find themselves awash in the flood of 120,000 women and children trafficked from Africa or the former Soviet Union. Ninety percent end up coerced into Europe’s proliferating sex industry. Handsome profits are made from unpaid servitude, perhaps as much as \$9.5 billion each year.

It is reminiscent of the words of Ecclesiastes: “I saw the tears of the oppressed – and they have no comforter. And I declared that the dead, who had already died, are happier than the living, who are still alive” (Ecclesiastes 4:1-2).

Get Involved

The good news is that concerned voices – Christian and otherwise – are beginning to rise up against these abuses. To get started, contact www.antislavery.org, the world’s oldest international human rights organization. Christian groups involved include the Salvation Army (www.salvationarmy.org), Sojourners (www.sojourners.org) and various agencies of World Vision (www.worldvision.org). With the help of such groups, Christians can organize, advertise the problem, set up a booth where appropriate, write letters to those in authority, and make some noise. Let’s all help spread the word!

(Reprinted by permission from *Christian Odyssey magazine*.)

Hispanics Host Unity Fiesta

Glendora, CA: "We have had some hard lessons to learn in dealing with people of different ethnic groups," former TV commentator Ronald Kelly told the Glendora congregation of the Worldwide Church of God at their tenth annual Cinco de Mayo celebration recently. "Christ wants his church to be in the forefront of that effort."



UNIDAD! Everyone feasted well at Glendora's annual Hispanic Heritage Day, an event well worth celebrating.

(Continued from page 3)

ORM and Reconcile newsletter are built on the premise that the greatest key to human relations, to the wise handling of people, was given 2000 years ago by Jesus Christ: "In everything do to others what you would have them do to you" (Matthew 7:12).

Bell and Smith reaffirm that life principles and work principles are often one and the same. At ORM we have learned that almost every human relations endeavor intersects sooner or later with the theme of reconciliation. Such strategies as active listening, reducing anger, thinking of what is best for even problem people and a concern to help them become more productive and successful - these principles can make all the difference in handling difficult people.

Order our book, *Mending Broken Relationships*, through our website (ATimeToReconcile.org) or ask for the booklet *Standing in the Gap* for more practical, in-depth information along these lines. You'll always be glad you did.

— Neil Earle

ORM on the Web!

If you haven't seen our website in a while, please check it out. It now has a whole new look and you can access it by going to ATimeToReconcile.org. Take a look at our growing operations and help us help the effort to bridge society's gaps.

The need is there. The Worldwide Church of God is one of many denominations that embrace the teeming diversity that exists in multicultural Los Angeles, sometimes called "the capital of the third world." The need is there. About half of all U.S. population growth is occurring among Hispanics. Tense issues over immigration bedevil the nation's politics, even as we write. However, some are making an effort to bridge the gaps at the grass roots level. More and more churches are making an effort to sponsor Diversity Days and that is an encouraging trend.



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If you would like to know more about reconciliation, be sure to visit our web site:

www.ATimeToReconcile.org