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CARE CONVERSATIONS

FORWARD
FROM
DR TINA LAMONT // Director TEC



Dear Friend,

We are basing this semester's Care Conversations on the TEC Leadership Matrix.

Belonging is a deeply Biblical idea that is thematic throughout God's story. Not only is it wired into our DNA, it is anchored in God's covenant with humanity. God is a covenant-making and a covenant-keeping God, and as image bearers, God has created us to know and belong to Him, intending this design for humanity to also be reflected in our relationships with each other. It is a unique gift and honour to belong to the Living God; the creator of all things and to have the unbreakable commitment of His love and acceptance based on Him and Him alone, with no merit of our own. Coming to an understanding of this momentous reality will shape our call to be covenant-keeping servants to

God and determine how we serve others in our school communities.

We pray God's blessing on you this week as you keep your gaze fixed on our faithful, covenant-keeping God.

Yours in Christ,

Dr Tina Lamont

Director TEC

The Excellence Centre



Series 14:

COMMUNITY SPIRITUAL FORMATION

REFLECTION BY
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Number 10:

UNDERSTANDING COVENANT COMMUNITIES

I continue to spend some time with Leaders of Biblical Christian Schools in Indonesia. This year the theme across their schools has been “Truly Yours”.

Teachers, leaders, staff, students and families have sought to understand what this means, and whether it changes how we live our lives.

To understand this theme fully, we need to keep going back to the Bible in order to understand how God says to His people “I am Truly Yours”; and how His

people might say to God “I am Truly Yours”.

The Biblical narrative expresses clearly the nature of God-initiated covenant. Firstly, let’s remind ourselves as to why God chose the nation of Israel to be “a people holy to the Lord”.

This was the nation that God delivered out of Egyptian slavery, the nation God brought to the land of Canaan, and the nation through whom would come Jesus, the Messiah. Was there something special about these people that made them more attractive to God? Did they somehow deserve God’s favour?

As we know, the answer to that question is “No”. Deuteronomy makes it clear that Israel was to be holy to the Lord, (that is “set apart” to God) by His sovereign choice alone. There was nothing about Israel that caused them to be deserving of such a choice.

This is God’s covenant story throughout the whole of Scripture. Covenant is not a conditional agreement; it is a clear sovereign choice.

John Piper spent years of his life coming to terms with God’s sovereign control over the universe and everyone in it. He desperately wanted to believe that his own will was the most important factor in his relationship with Christ. After many concentrated months of studying Romans 9, he concluded that God said to him:

“I will not simply be analysed; I will be adored. I will not simply be pondered; I will be proclaimed. My sovereignty is not simply to be scrutinized; it is to be heralded. It is not grist for the mill of controversy; it is gospel for sinners who know that their only hope is the sovereign triumph of God’s grace over their rebellious will.”

The New Testament is full of this truth. Ephesians 1 tells us clearly that God chose His people “before the foundation of the world” – that is stunning! But what it shows us is that our behaviour and actions did not cause God to choose us.

Paul, writing to the Colossians, makes it abundantly clear that if we were to be judged simply on our own thinking and actions, we would be both unqualified and disqualified. Paul rejoices that the Father has “qualified us”. “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the Kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we HAVE redemption!”.

Therefore, we can rejoice in the truth that when we are the people of God, we can say to Him, “We are Truly Yours” – because He initiates the relationship and eternally sustains it.

So, what does this mean for our relationship with students? What does it mean for our school communities?

Here is another truth. The way that we relate to other people reflects the way that we think God relates to us. Our responsibility in community is to reflect our understanding of God’s relationship with us into the life of the community.

Thus, because we are secure in our relationship with God, because we hear Him say to us “I am truly yours, and you are truly Mine”, that is the security we must reflect to our students.

It will mean that we will love and nurture our students as people who have been brought to our community by God’s sovereign will. We must communicate to our students that they are “truly ours”; that we are committed to love them and help them to grow in every good way.

Blessings as you develop covenant relationship in your school community.

Brian

Brian Cox

Consultant in Leadership & Education



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For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

Luke 14:28

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