

Hello from The Hedge

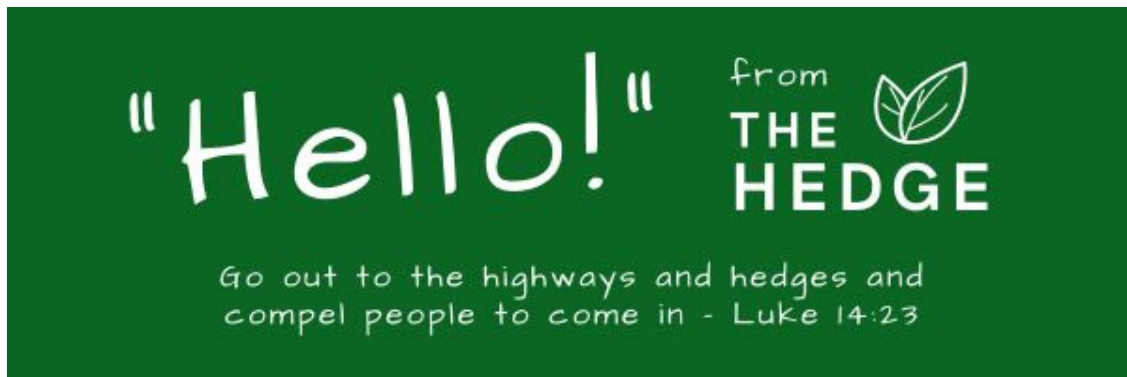
1 message

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Evangelism in the Park

Summer project '26 is well underway! One of the most important parts of our weekly schedule is the time we spend sharing the Gospel in the park on Sunday evenings. The first week of the project we taught the students how to do The Bridge, which is a way of sharing the Gospel using an illustration based on Romans 6:23. And as soon as they learned how to do it, we hit the park to get some real-world experience with it! We know that cold-call evangelism is usually not the most effective form of evangelism, but it gives the students the opportunity to build their confidence at sharing the Gospel. What we've seen to be true is this: if they can share the Gospel with strangers in the park during the summer, then they are more likely to share the Gospel with their friends and acquaintances during the school year.

What I See

Stuart Estes, ministry team leader

One of the things I'm thankful for at the ministry is our piece of property near campus and the house on it. Having the property and house has been a strategic advantage for the ministry in many different ways. It's a place for our students to hang out, a place for us and the laborers to host Bible studies, a place to have our weekly gathering. But for some time now the building has been showing some signs of more than just normal wear and tear.

Last month we had a foundation specialist come out and look at the building. After reviewing the situation, his recommendation was that something needed to be done to the foundation if the building was going to continue to be a space we could use into the future. This, of course, is not going to be an inexpensive process, so that has caused us to slow down and think about what the best path forward may be.

Honestly, this is way out of my league. I've never led any kind of building renovation project at a ministry. The thought of a capital campaign for a new building makes my head swim. I am thankful for the property and the building, but this has caused me to have to remind myself of that more often.

As I've been thinking about this situation, I realize more and more there are many options for moving forward. And it seems like every time I talk to someone about it there's another angle I haven't considered. But I'm also realizing that I haven't been doing one thing that I should be doing - praying.

In his book *Simply Prayer*, Bill Elliff tells this story about his oldest son-in-law, Randy. Randy was a mechanic who put himself through college, so he's knowledgeable about cars in a way that Elliff self-admittedly is not. From time to time, Elliff's other children would have car trouble, and they would call Elliff to get advice about what to do, often from the side of the road. He would ask them if they had checked the oil, and if that didn't work out, he would simply say to them, "Why are you calling me when I know nothing about cars? Call Randy. Quick!"*

Elliff tells this story to illustrate this point: "Do you want to handle everything by yourself? Is the situation best resolved by your limited understanding and resources? Prayerlessness indicates this unwise decision. Cut through the middleman (yourself and your merely human thinking) and go right to God in prayer."*

I do believe that is my problem. I see this trouble with our property, and my first inclination is the inclination I've struggled with my whole life - to trust in my own thinking. How quickly I forget the Proverb (3:5): *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.*

As I've continued to try and handle this situation by myself, not only do I not make any progress, but I actually am paralyzed more and more by indecision and endless possibilities. This is why the Lord tells us not to lean on our own understanding - it's a shallow and stagnant well! Instead, he wants us to have access to the deep and endless source of wisdom and power that he is. He calls us to trust in him with all our heart, and prayer is the clearest sign of that trust.

So, I'm writing this to confess that I haven't been praying about the building like I should. By God's grace, I'm going to change this. I'm also writing to invite you to pray along with me. Pray that God would give us wisdom about what to do with our property and building so that we can continue to follow the mission he has given us: To develop high-impact Christ followers who have global and eternal priorities and perspectives. And as we pray, let's be open to what he tells us - it could mean fixing the building, it could mean getting rid of it, it could mean something completely different than either one of those.

But one thing is for certain - if we ask for wisdom, he will give it generously (James 1:5). And this is also true: *What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the*

heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him (1 Corinthians 2:9).

That's what I see when I look back on the last month at The Hedge.

* Elliff, Bill. 2020. Simply Prayer: Joining God for the Rest of Your Life. TruthINK Publications: Little Rock, Arkansas. p.10.

Prayer Requests

Summer project students - Chloe, Danielle, Jacob, Kaitlyn, Michael
Wisdom for next steps with building and property
New freshmen connections in the fall

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