

A Word from Mack

Change starts by shaking whole tree

Samuel Johnson, whose breathtaking work, *A Dictionary of the English Language* was published in 1755, is the most quoted man of letters in the English world, second only to Shakespeare. His letters, essays, books, and poems are voluminous and only give a hinting smidgen of the expansiveness of his spirit. Needless to say, he was a major force during his lifetime. I have been thinking about some counsel given to Johnson when he was only 16.

Johnson's older cousin, Cornelius, told his teenage cousin, "Samuel, most intelligent people study the leaves and the limbs of a tree all of their lives, but you must grasp the trunk! And then you can shake all of the leaves and all of the limbs at once." I have been pondering those words because if we ever needed trunk-grabbing, we need it now.

Think of it. What is going on all around us for heaven's sake? We are majoring in minors. We are perfecting means which have no meaningful purpose for the reconstruction of the foundations of life. Just press your ear down to the earth of everyday news and listen to the thunder of riled up folks fighting over a scrap heap of self-centered self-interests. One wag said it, "We are like a convention of ants arguing over Robert's Rules of Order, and never noticing that we are on the skin of some lumbering hippopotamus about to immerse himself in the river to the utter disaster of our colony."

You and I and millions of others are yearning to grab the trunk so that we can shake all of the leaves and all of the limbs at once. We are longing for some new expression of ancient truth that can remold and, yes, renew us and therefore the whole world. So I have been meditating on Cousin Cornelius's profound insight and here is what I believe we must do to grab the trunk.

Let us first boil down all of the complexity out of this brew of everyday living so that we can get to the basics of human existence. And once done, I believe that what will be left are only two fundamental challenges facing the entire span of life and every single human being. Those two rock bottom basic challenges are these: First, we must sustain a healthy planet. And second, we must grow a human society that has learned to care for one another based on our common humanness.

Now, those are our two fundamental challenges. We have many problems, but only two fundamental challenges. We must keep the earth healthy and we must grow a human race capable of inhabiting this earthly village. That's the trunk. Now how do we grab it?

I am not versed in the science of our environment. All I know is that there is no Planet "B." We do not have an escape if our earth is not sustained. I am not arguing the "how" because, frankly, I have no idea. I am just saying whatever it takes to solve this first challenge, then I'm in

and I know that you are too. Because if we do not solve this one, then there is no use to solving the second challenge. We will not be here.

So how do we grow a renewed society capable of ever renewing life and lives together? Simply put we must get a comprehensive process and model of care that includes every human being. Put love into practice for whole cities and whole countries. This is the goal and the everyday work of all of us. And CRI exists to make your caring visible so that you can help reconnect the human race through love.

And now here is the amazing truth. Unless we solve the second challenge of life together then we cannot possibly solve the first challenge of our good earth. Because unless we all cooperate for the sake of our planet then it will not stay healthy. So the first order ops business in trunk grabbing is the ancient insight found in the Torah, the Law of Moses: “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am The Lord.” (Leviticus 19:18) Let’s get to work. Come and join us for a grand old Trunk Grabbing time. It is the tree of Love, so grab this trunk today. God bless you all.