

The Center for Medical Mission's *e-Pistle* June 2013

The days are passing quickly and I find it is time to put together another newsletter. I don't mind as it forces me to slow down. I feel joy when I think of you and all you are doing for the kingdom. Thank you! It is a privilege to serve and support you as you serve. Right now I'm wondering how many people will be in heaven because you have sacrificially and generously shared your gifts and skills. I hope you can find time in your busyness to reflect on what a privilege it is to serve the King of Kings.

There is going to be a change in the frequency of the e-Pistle. Other responsibilities are making it necessary for me to prepare and send the e-Pistle only every other month – at least for a while. If there is a need to get you information between e-Pistles, I will send it via an e-Pistlegram.

Policy Vault – I haven't been very successful in getting you to send me your facility's policies. I have less than 10, but I'm still hoping to receive more. I want to have them available to share with others who would find that having sample policies makes it easier to get started. Please send to susan.carter@cnda.org.

What You Should Know – I have not received any items for this in the last few weeks, so there will be none in this issue. Would you mind taking a moment to think about what has been a valuable resource for your ministry and share that with me? For a long time I have dreamed of hospitals supporting one another and helping each grow stronger. This is one of the ways you can offer support to others who are serving in a place that might not be quite as developed as the one where you serve. I'm going to say "thank you" in advance with the expectation that some of you will respond.

I hope you are praying for our [Orientation to Medical Missions](#) for new medical missionaries. While we are expecting more registrations and we already have 46 participants. This is such an important training for young people who will soon be some of your colleagues. Please pray with us. The first session will be July 20-23 and the second session will be July 25-28. I will appreciate your prayers as well as I try to run the conference and take care of all the little details that come up.

I've given Dave Stevens a break and not asked him for an article this month. He has many other writing assignments that keep him busy. Included in this issue are:

[Cura Animarum](#) by Rev. Stan Key
[Matchmakers](#) by Dr. Ron Koteskey

Enjoy!

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Cura Animarum

by Rev. Stan Key

HUMILITY IN THE WRONG PLACE

*“...How long will you refuse to humble yourself...?”
(Exodus 10:3, NIV 2011)*

Humility is in vogue again. Yes, surprisingly enough, our post-modern culture has rediscovered a long, lost virtue and restored it to its rightful place of prominence. But before you rejoice too quickly, be warned: humility ain't what it used to be!

Today, we are exhorted to be “humble” about the truth. Humility is defined as being hesitant, tentative, even doubtful about what is right. Such a posture is touted as virtuous. Indeed, those who piously preach that we should not be dogmatic about truth are often exalted as paragons of virtue. What arrogant pride, these modern-day “saints” proclaim, to pretend you know the truth, to profess you have found the way. What audacity to imply that you are right and others wrong. If you still harbor such archaic absolutism, repent! Humble yourself, you sinner! Strange, isn't it, that people can be so certain that everything is uncertain!

The problem is that humility has become attached to the wrong thing. Writing over a century ago, G.K. Chesterton astutely discerned what was happening.

What we suffer from today is humility in the wrong place. Modesty has moved from the organ of ambition [to] the organ of conviction; where it was never meant to be. A man was meant to be doubtful about himself, but undoubting about the truth; this has been exactly reversed....We are on the road to producing a race of men too mentally modest to believe in the multiplication table. (Orthodoxy. pp. 34f.)

The Bible points to a better path. It exhorts me to be humble about myself. Doubting the truth is sheer folly. Doubting myself is the beginning of wisdom. True humility is simply the ability to see myself for what I really am: created by God, corrupted by sin, redeemable by grace! Biblical humility should never be equated with a negative self-image or that pious posturing which parries all compliments with, “O, it's not me. It's the Lord.” True humility knows nothing of such smarmy pretense. The genuinely humble person never thinks about his humility. Indeed, he doesn't think about himself at all!

If you think you are not proud, then you probably are. And if you are proud of your humility, then your disease is further advanced than you ever imagined! Would you like

to become humble? The first step is admitting what a pompous little self-inflated egotist you really are.

Missionary Singles Issues: Matchmakers

by Dr. Ron Koteskey

Junko had served cross-culturally for nearly three years. Knowing that her parents disapproved of what she was doing, one Sunday after the service her pastor told her that he would be glad to help her find a husband. She was delighted and thanked him profusely. She wanted to marry but just did not know how to go about finding a husband because her host culture did not seem to have any way for her to find a mate.

Bill, also single, served with a different agency but attended the same church. A couple of weeks later, the pastor suggested to him that he might want to date Junko. Rather than being grateful, Bill politely told the pastor to “mind his own business.” He had previously thought of asking Junko, but this “pressure” by the pastor made him change his mind.

Why did Junko and Bill react so differently? The basic answer is that they were from different cultures, Junko from an Eastern one and Bill from a Western one.

Matchmakers

Matchmakers are usually defined as those who bring two unmarried individuals together in an attempt to promote a marriage. Traditionally these matchmakers may range anywhere from individuals who invite two people over for dinner, hoping that a romantic relationship will develop, to those who are certified matchmakers who make their living getting couples together. Today, matchmakers also include internet dating services which attempt to match people on a variety of criteria.

Such matchmakers may be appreciated and accepted or despised and rejected. A 1977 Webster's Twentieth Century Dictionary defines matchmakers as those who arrange marriages but adds “or try to do so by scheming.” Such scheming matchmakers are often rejected with little consideration.

Matchmakers in the Bible

Several kinds of matchmakers appear in the pages of the first books of both the Old and New Testaments. People today often think that such marriages do not involve love, but many of them resulted in loving relationships.

- Abraham asked his most trusted servant to be a matchmaker to find a wife for his son Isaac. This servant found a woman that fit the criteria Abraham gave, Isaac married Rebekah and he loved her (Genesis 24).

- Isaac did not get a matchmaker or give any input regarding Esau's wives. These marriages were a source of grief to both parents, Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 26:34-35; 27:46).
- Isaac gave Jacob (his other son) specific instructions about who he should marry, Jacob followed the instructions and he had a loving marriage with Rachel (Genesis 28-29:30).
- Laban, Rachel's father, was a scheming matchmaker, and it resulted in a marriage to Jacob, one in which Leah did not feel loved (Genesis 29:31-34).
- The matchmaker is not named, but Mary and Joseph were pledged (betrothed) to be married before she was pregnant with Jesus. Although he did not understand what was happening, Joseph must have loved Mary deeply because he wanted to break the betrothal quietly so she would not be disgraced (Matthew 1:18-19).

Matchmakers since Bible times

Many cultures before, during and since Bible times have included matchmakers as one of the principal ways singles could meet each other. The roles of matchmakers varied widely across cultures. In some cultures, most singles met their prospective spouses through matchmakers, so it was common throughout the culture. In other cultures, only royalty or upper class people met through matchmakers.

Such matchmaking continued for another 1,800 years. However, as adolescence was being invented in Europe and North America, matchmaking there became less common. As individualism increased, the idea of having someone else (matchmaker), perhaps chosen by yet someone else (parents), choose one's spouse became less and less popular. What was once common has become rather rare as two major changes occurred in Western culture during the last two centuries.

The first change in the use of matchmakers took place in Europe and North America as Western culture invented adolescence. Simultaneous with gradually requiring everyone to live their teen years as singles, Western culture gradually eliminated the use of matchmakers. This change took place between 1850 and 1950.

Fiddler on the Roof, the long-running musical on Broadway and Academy Award-winning movie, is set in 1905 czarist Russia. It begins with the song "Tradition" followed by the song "Matchmaker." In it a poor Jewish milkman struggles with the loss of tradition while his three oldest daughters struggle with what is left of it relative to matchmakers finding them husbands. Each of the three strong-willed teenagers' choice of a husband moves further and further from the customs of their father's faith.

The second change is occurring now, a century later at the turn of the 21st century, but it is taking place more rapidly and is an increasing use of matchmakers of a different kind. Rather than parents finding a friend, relative or professional matchmaker, singles

who want to marry are increasingly turning to internet dating services which match people for marriage. In fact, one such service has chosen to call itself Matchmaker.com.

Using the New Matchmakers

Singles who decide to use these new matchmakers, internet dating services, need to do so carefully. In the American justice system, people are assumed to be innocent until proven guilty. Internet dating needs to be viewed the opposite; assume people to be guilty until you have carefully determined that they are innocent.

Do not assume that Christian workers are innocent. I was at staff meeting in a church when a new youth pastor wanted to use volunteers before they had attended the church for six months (church policy). He ended his plea saying, "They are seminary students, so they must be OK." The pastor replied, "In the five years I have been here, we have had three incidents, and all three perpetrators have been seminary students." Here are some suggestions.

- Choose wisely. Internet dating services vary widely. eHarmony.com is very popular among missionaries. This is probably because it emphasizes long-term relationships, was developed by a Christian psychologist teaching at a Christian graduate school and matches singles on the basis of their answers to many items in a research-validated questionnaire .
- Remain anonymous. Use an email address that does not include your name or agency and a phone that cannot be traced to you.
- Do a background check. This may seem unromantic, but remember that all information was supplied by the person. You can do your own check on the internet or pay for one that may be more thorough.
- Meet for the first time in public and do not end the meeting by going to either of your homes.
- Tell someone who you are going to meet, where you are going and when you plan to return from that first meeting.
- Drive yourself, take your cell phone and don't leave personal things unattended at that first meeting.
- If meeting far away, stay in a hotel, use taxi or rental car and keep family and friends posted by phone calls or texting.
- Stop communicating if and when "red flags" appear.

Elaborations on these suggestions and additional ones are available at match.com under "Online Dating Safety Tips."

Red Flags

Watch for these “red flags” that may indicate a predator or fraud. You may not consider these to be “red flags,” so if any happen, it would be best to ask a trusted friend if they may indicate a problem when a potential date...

- Asks for financial information, such as credit card numbers or bank information.
- Pressures you for personal information, such as your phone number, address or Social Security number.
- Asks for your address, even to send flowers or gifts.
- Asks for money in any form, especially if he or she asks for it to be wired.
- Claims to be recently widowed and needing companionship.
- Talks about destiny or “fate” relative to meeting you.
- Includes grammar or spelling errors, especially those which would be rare for someone writing in his or her first language.

Responses to Self-Appointed Matchmakers

Finally, here are some suggested ways to respond to people who take it upon themselves to be matchmakers for you.

- Colleagues from your passport culture. The best way to respond to unwanted matchmaking when expatriate friends try it is just as you would at home. However, do remember that you will be interacting with them over years to come, so respond politely and respectfully. They probably want to help, not to harm or offend.
- Multi-cultural teammates. In these days of multi-cultural teams, others serving with your agency may attempt to find a match for you. Remember that they probably mean well, but they just do not understand that singleness is a viable option, especially if they come from cultures where it is shameful or really bad.
- Nationals. The same is true as for nationals where you serve. If singleness is frowned on, such nationals probably mean well and just do not understand. There may be unspoken expectations on the part of the matchmaker involving saving "face" should a match not go as hoped. There may be pressure after accepting the initial "set-up."

For other topics, please visit www.missionarycare.com. Also please let your non-medical colleagues know about these free resources.

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