

Dear Friends of Global Children at Risk,

February 2024

## **Ponderings**

I am a part of several different TBRI (Trust Based Relational Intervention) cohorts where people from many different professions gather on a regular basis to discuss cases and encourage one another. These usually include both believing and unbelieving therapists, social workers, foster/adoptive parents, teachers and missionaries. But sometimes it includes doctors and people working in the juvenile justice system. I am always intrigued by the passion with which TBRI is embraced. It is with every bit an evangelistic zeal. Many people have forgone their previous jobs to begin teaching and training TBRI full-time in their respective fields.

What is it about TBRI that is so compelling? Believers who receive this training easily see the word of God woven all throughout the principles. Unbelievers, with no Biblical knowledge or worldview, are deeply drawn to it and transformed by it.

Humans are designed to be in relationships, to connect and attach with others. It is a function of our being created in the image of our Triune God. **The quality of our relationships**, our connections and attachments, **determine the quality of our lives**; our physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being.

Recently, I have been pondering one particular aspect of our humanity, that of trust. The American Dictionary defines trust as, "a firm belief in the integrity, ability, or character of a person, confidence or reliance in." It is IMPOSSIBLE to have any meaningful relationship without trust. Without trust in others, we live to be in control. We behave in self-protective and manipulative ways. We don't have to look far to see the resulting carnage of a whole society living without trust.

Implicit in the above definition is that **reliance on another will only develop when you are certain they are FOR YOU, or in biblical terms, they are "good."** Is it any wonder that the first and foremost lie of the enemy is to accuse the Lord of not being good of not being for us?

Interestingly, you can only find out if someone is reliable by being dependent on them. This is truly terrifying. What if they don't come through? Or worse yet, hurt you? In our culture, we raise our children to become independent and self-sufficient. We chafe at the very thought of being dependent on another. But the Lord **demand**s we become like children if we are going to enter His Kingdom. Children trust. Babies don't have a choice. They are dependent.

Jesus bids us to test Him. His challenge is to come to Him like a baby who depends on Him for everything so that we may know experientially He is faithful and good (Mt. 6, Lk.12). Only then will we trust Him and be able to intimately connect with Him.

In a broken world, learning to trust both God and others is perhaps the most difficult task we face. Yet, if the mandate of humanity is, "to love God with all our hearts and others as ourselves," we must.

The essence of TBRI is to help those who have been broken and violated by untrustworthy people restore their ability to trust others, and to help caretakers learn to become people worthy of others' trust. When this happens, obstacles to trusting the heavenly Father are removed. Life and hope bubble up.

Experiencing healthy relationships with God and others is the core of what it means to be fully human. This is what is so compelling to others, whether they recognize the source or not. It creates softer soil for this ultimate revelation.

## Ministry

I am busy preparing materials and coaching my various projects. It is much like being a mother to kids in different developmental stages. The Central and South American groups are at the initial stage, the Psalm68five camping group is in their adolescence doing a great job of implementation and learning to train their new volunteers, and the Russia cohort is well on their way to becoming independent networks that can develop their own resources and further train others. I love the challenge of creating fresh and relevant lessons for each group.

Travel is picking up this year. I will be making two trips to Colombia, one or two with Psalm68 five, and hopefully a trip back to Russia this summer. In between face-to-face visits, regular zoom calls keep me very busy.

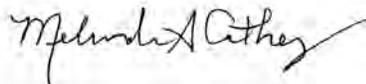
## Family

Our big family news this month is the marriage celebration of Micah and Beka in her home, Sao Paulo, Brazil. We all will be traveling there for this wonderful event and to rejoice with Beka as she has not been home for close to 4 years. It's been nearly 2 years since Micah and Beka's wedding in Denver.



Thank you for journeying with me as we, together, learn to live in such a way as to encourage one another to more fully “Love God with all our hearts and others as ourselves.”

Pondering the TBRI Journey,



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