

Articles and Sermons :: What have we lost in the lost art of letter writing? - RC Sproul Jr**What have we lost in the lost art of letter writing? - RC Sproul Jr - posted by davym (), on: 2014/10/17 3:58**

What have we lost in the lost art of letter writing? - RC Sproul Jr

My Dearest Gaulips,

You asked about some of the newest features our media consultants are working on, and how you might put them to good use in your treatment of your patient. I will explain a few of them, but do not lose sight of the simple principle â€” the more we can take these cursed humans away from their bodies, the better off we can be. Entice them with ease, with reach, with speed, with convenience, but take away from them the things that matter the most â€” actual communication. When we move them from aural communication to written communication we automatically remove all the subtleties of communication, the non-verbal cues that give context, and perhaps more important, social lubricant.

Our enemy, however, managed quite well with the written word. I remember those heady days when we lit so many fires in those early churches. And that accursed traitor Paul would take pen to parchment and put out our fires. Hand copied, hand delivered letters, some plain and simple, others complicated and deep established and strengthened, and still strengthen His body. So weâ€™re trying another tack.

Our internet division has still managed to hype all the familiar communication strengths while diverting attention from the weaknesses. Because the internet allows them to write and publish quickly, it encourages them to write and publish foolishly. One key stroke and every ill-formed, ill-informed and ill-intended thought is launched like a flaming arrow. I remember how humans used to labor over their words, how even the practical challenge of finding an envelope and a stamp would allow their ire to chill, and for cooler heads to prevail.

The same principle of speed works on the other end as well. Because it is so easy to send information there is a corresponding increase in information. But the eye gate cannot convert to broadband. That is, they can only read so much. Since there is so much to read, they read too swiftly, too carelessly. They scan just enough to form a broad opinion, then switch over to outgoing and send their take into the web. Soon enough such carelessness, in connection with the lack of context leads to giving offense and taking offense, and we enjoy a feast of bitterness.

The humans, noting the glut of information, the bottleneck of the eye, have come up with an interesting solution. They call it twitter, and its key function is that it reduces all communication down to 140 characters. Paul would not have even made it out of his greeting. Imagine him trying to write to the Corinthians â€” To the saints â€” Grace and peace to you in the name of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I remember you and pray with you, giving thanks and heâ€™d be done. When Paul wrote people mulled over the letters, studied them. They smelled of the very love and labor of the author for the audience.

Which brings us perhaps to the best feature of the internet â€” it is unreal. There is no actual world in the world wide web. Though there is a web. Just like buying with a credit card is easier because it doesnâ€™t look or feel like money, so communicating via the web, where there is no ink, no paper, no hands touching, feels like not communicating at all. Which means none of the rules of communication apply. We arenâ€™t lying if we arenâ€™t actually saying something. We certainly canâ€™t be held accountable if no one knows us, or knows our name.

My advice with your patient then is to push him away from patience. My advice for your human is to push him away from his humanity. Teach him to see himself as a mere collection of ever changing opinions about an ever changing world of issues. Teach him to see those with whom he disagrees as a collection of ever changing opinions about an ever changing world of issues. Encourage him to see letters as the media of a dead generation, and his own generation on the cutting edge of communication. As always, when we give them a shiny bauble, never let them see the beauty we make them give up.

Donâ€™t forget that letters are personal, just as this one is. Be sure not to miss my tone. In case youâ€™re unsure, itâ€™s hungry.

In His Satanic Majestyâ€™s Service,

Baron Tech

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