

“YOU AREN’T HEARING ME.”

Here’s an interesting website: “[The Global Conflict Tracker](#)”.

The home page locates hotspots around the world:



(Actually, I was surprised the US didn’t earn a dot on the map for the Congressional tantrums underway, both in, and across the aisles.)

Now a global map is one way to depict what’s unraveling. But a location is the manifestation, not the cause.

Each conflict carries its own issues and particulars of course, like the raw power grab of Russia against Ukraine, the genocidal bigotry of Hamas/Iran in Israel, or the religious purges inside Afghanistan and Iraq.

And yet, each conflict has a common core: “You aren’t hearing me.” The Russians used this line for decades, for centuries to justify slaughters.

Not understanding people is a recipe for disasters. All through history the Jihadists and Zealots have chanted this “You aren’t hearing me.” phrase to justify wars, genocide, oppression.

Using power to ignore or quash people becomes, literally, match-to-the-gasoline, igniting conflicts, uprisings and global disasters.

And at the other end of the spectrum, understanding another person is almost magical in its ability to calm many who would otherwise cause trouble.

Don’t get me wrong. It doesn’t always work that way. I’m not trying to sell you some mushy rendition of “Can’t we all just get along?”

There are some who can only be stopped in their malevolence by being destroyed. Most folks reading this post might nod in agreement about terminating the Hitlers, the Stalins, the Bin-Ladens.

But the thing is, most of us are not in charge of wars, diplomacy or foreign policy. We are in charge of living lives around people next to us, most of whom are not quite like you, or me.

My duty, as a disciple of Christ, is hearing and understanding, not debating. If you thought I just wrote “don’t disagree with people who push back on your faith” you missed me. The biblical mandate is to understand people. For examples, see passages like [Proverbs 18:13](#) and [James 1:19](#) and [Colossians 4:6](#).

“You aren’t hearing me” is the thematic core of conflicts today in our businesses and churches and organizations in the West.

“You aren’t hearing me” is the #1 reason people walk off their jobs today. (See [Gallup’s State of the Global Workplace Report](#), [Society of Human Resource Management](#), and the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).)

And the Nones, Dones, Dechurched and Deconverted? Yep. “Not hearing me.” See for examples [Dr. Todd Hall’s “The Connected Life”](#), [The Gospel Coalition’s “What is The Great Dechurching?”](#) and [Dr. John Marriott’s “The Anatomy of Deconversion”](#).

We are hosting conversations about the implications in “You aren’t hearing me” on our episodes of The Disciple Dilemma:

- [Set Adrift!](#)
- [Stumbling](#)
- The Connected Life (coming later this October)

Leadership alert: This is all around us in Christian community. The angst and fears and exits of so many relate to this need for relationships, which in its true form is discipling people. Not as in programs and big groups. As in one or two alongside another, especially the loners and solo Christians wondering if there’s really any difference between religious memberships and any other club someone belongs to.

The traditional Western inertia around discipleship is partially biblical, partially commercial, largely ineffective. And it will require leaders to change the course of local Christian culture—as in the walls of the local churches to impact this dilemma.

Interested in getting deeper into this conversation? Join us at [The Disciple Dilemma](#) to meet, chat and to consider whether or not we “get” you.

Dennis Allen and his wife Karen live in the Washington DC area and are members of Reston Presbyterian Church. Dennis is the Author of “The Disciple Dilemma” and works as a CEO, specializing in corporate turnarounds