Dear Ellie,  

I’d like to expound upon Kasey’s article about her “dance club mission field” for the readers. Although I have questions about her scriptural interpretation and subsequent activities, I believe her pursuit to think beyond the traditional is an example toward developing a “mission mindset.” A visual image of our Christian subculture emerged from Kasey’s words: “we formed a (safe, joyful) circle with other Christians…(while) the rest of the room (was) too (graphic).” What do you imagine? I see this little pile of cherry gelatin at the bottom of a bowl! (Yup! I’ve been on a jello kick!) Now, just in case you haven’t discovered yet, if you don’t stir the gelatin and water, you end up with a blob of red goop and wishy-washy pink jello. If you follow the directions and stir it, you end up with yummy jiggly red jello. (Oddly enough) this causes me to question our existence and role in a pluralistic post-modern society. 

Whether discussing pluralism and post-modernism to you is like the excitement of beating the dawn on the first morning of duck hunting season or simply another morning where you’d prefer to sleep-in, it’s important to learn and think about these. Historically, liberty and moral integrity were deemed as preeminent precursors to a successful U.S. society. Liberty promotes pluralism and now seems to overshadow moral integrity. Pluralism is diverse autonomous participation in a common civilization. Religions are often at passionate odds in a pluralistic society. Most efforts to protect religious liberty have been with neutrality. Neutralized religious liberty seems to state that personal religious beliefs may be held privately but not meaningfully vocalized or practiced publicly. Permitted public religious pluralism has been replaced with mandated public secularism. This societal state is linked to ushering post-modernism (i.e. pluralistic truth). Extreme post-modernism rejects modernism (i.e. the natural), where “that may be true for you, but not for me.” As Millard Erickson explains, the dilemma for society is that “when belief in objective truth is lost…not all views are treated as equally true and legitimate in practice…the view held by those with the power…is given exclusive rights.” This has significant implications on all of life. How now shall we live? I don’t know exactly.

This is what I do know: “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Cor 5:17-20).” What is this new creation? God has gifted you and world), be about the ministry of reconciliation, be—a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1-2)—this is a mission mindset! As Bob Briner implores “we need to reclaim the territory, not in a triumphalistic sense but out of a strong conviction that this is where we belong…What I’m calling for is a radically different way of thinking about our world. Instead of running from it, we need to rush into it.” Are we being the goop in wishy-washy pink jello? Or, are we the gelatin swirling amidst the water? Please, think about and act on it.

What is a mission mindset?

However God has gifted you (and He has!) and wherever He places you (at Union, work and play and in your dorms, Jackson, TN. U.S. and world), be about the ministry of reconciliation, be a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1-2)—this is a mission mindset! As Bob Briner implores “we need to reclaim the territory, not in a triumphalistic sense but out of a strong conviction that this is where we belong…What I’m calling for is a radically different way of thinking about our world. Instead of running from it, we need to rush into it.” Are we being the goop in wishy-washy pink jello? Or, are we the gelatin swirling amidst the water? Please, think about and act on it.

On another note, I’d like to officially say “so long;” I’ll be attending Regent College in Vancouver, BC this fall. It has been a privilege and pleasure to be a part of the ministry of reconciliation here at Union. I pray ya’ll will continue to grow in loving God with all you heart, mind, soul and strength. I’ll miss ya’ll very much. God’s deepest blessings! Love in Him, Angela Earl:)