



Point of View

Dear Marketplace Friend,

When you live in Southern California - and travel a lot - the grief is just a fact of life. People - *jealous, maybe?* - love to poke-fun at Californians for our “distinctives.” The two top grief-getters are our lack of seasons (*ie: our weather doesn't kill us in its extremes*); and, our earthquakes (*what the weather doesn't do to us, the fissures might*).

We have to travel to get weather. I spent last weekend hosting a conference at The Cove in Asheville, North Carolina. Asheville is definitely not California: early October was like the depths of an Orange County winter. The leaves *are* pretty, but pretty comes at a price.

While there - just south of the Mason-Dixon - I heard about a North Carolina State Trooper who spotted a pick-up truck without plates and pulled it over. He walked up to the quintessential red-neck driver and asked him, “*You got any ID?*” To which the driver replied, “*Bout what?*” Say what?

Across America, there is an intriguing challenge that exists: *we mistakenly believe that we share a common language*. If you live in just one place, hanging around with just one crowd, watching national network anchors do the talking, you can come to believe that. *Until you get around a bit...*

I had lunch at the Little Pigs BBQ in



Asheville and stared at the placemat. It was a primer for Yankees (*now, from out west, we don't feel like Yankees ... but, if you ain't from the South, you've got no choice but to be a Yankee!*) to learn just enough local English to get along. Samples:

A-Fixin': getting ready, as in, “*We're a-fixin' to go to the store soon.*”

Smart: To hurt, as in, “*It shore smarts where I got hit.*”

Askeered of: frightened or afraid of, as in: “*He's askeered of his own shadow.*”

You'ns: You or you all, as in: “*You'ns ain't gonna get no vittles.*”

Without a little coaching, Yankees could find themselves linguistically stranded

down in the Land of Dixie. Once you try it on a bit, however, y'all can get into it, if you try. It is a form of English, *even if it ain't the form you "grewed up" with ...*

If you don't want to be understood, you don't have to try so hard. That's why candidates for national office spend the big bucks for those campaign advisors: to teach them how to speak *union*, or *e-commerce*, or *Hispanic immigrant*, or *soccer mom*, or whatever dialect they'll next address. Language is the bridge that connects *people with a message* and *people with ears*.

That's nothing new; God figured it out a long time before the management at Little Pigs BBQ, or the consultants to the two major parties. God didn't just *have* a message; He *was* the message: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him ... The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory ..."* (John 1:1-14, selected).

God wanted so badly to get the message of his love to us that he learned to speak *our* language; he *became one of us* so that he would be understood. People who can't understand God haven't tuned-in on his #1 communication: it was his Son, Jesus, in the flesh. Get to know him, and you'll hear heaven's message, loud and clear. Yankee or Rebel, young or old: *everybody* can understand *that* Word!

Bob Shank

Bob Shank is Founder and Chief Mentoring Officer of The Master's Program (TMP).

To read prior issues of the Point of View visit:
www.mastersprogram.net

To learn more about TMP visit:
www.mastersprogram.org

To read a Program Summary of TMP visit:
www.mastersprogram.org/summary/

RSVP for a TMP Executive Briefing:
www.mastersprogram.org/Briefing.aspx