



Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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“...the ministry of the Word” – Acts 6:4

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

August 2016 “...the Dayspring from on high has come to give light to those that sit in darkness...” – Luke 1:78-79 Newsletter

Lessons From a Crooked Road

Dearhearts,

Perhaps Divine guidance is so sloppy because it requires us to walk not in our own understanding, but in His mystery by faith. Abram was summonsed to a place God would show him. *So which direction was he to point?* Paul had likely travelled hundreds of miles throughout what we now know as Turkey when the “Holy Spirit forbid them” to preach any further there. So they turned toward the coast hundreds of miles west where they then turned northeast toward Bithynia. But the Holy Spirit stopped them, and they walked 30-40 miles past Mysia to the coastal town of Troas. Only then did clarity come. In a vision in the night, a man from the region of Macedonia asked Paul to come and help them. Paul “assuredly assumed” the Lord wanted him and Silas to preach the gospel there. Boarding a ship and setting a straight course to Macedonia they sailed on past the first town to the second and then to Philippi, where they spent several days before meeting, not a man, but a woman; a seller of purple from Thyatira. Soon, Lydia and her household were saved and she invited Paul and Silas to stay at her home which eventually became the first church in the region. *How exciting!* But then whiplash! As Paul cast out a spirit of divination from a woman, businessmen who had profited from her prowess lost income and brought accusations against Paul and Silas. Bringing them before city officials they were publically stripped and whipped and thrown into the dankest part of the jail and shackled to the wall. *This was guidance? But things had seemed so clear...*

Then at midnight, with hymns of praise flowing from their lips...an earthquake! *What else could go wrong?* But in the quaking, prisoners’ shackles were loosed and prison doors unlocked. Upon realizing the likely loss of all his prisoners, the jailer drew out his sword to commit suicide, but from the darkness Paul’s voice rang out. “Sir, do yourself no harm. We are all here!” Bringing a torch into the dungeon, the jailer brought them out and fell to his knees. “What must I do to be saved?”

Paul saw the opened doors not as God’s deliverance for them, but as God’s deliverance for the jailer from the

prison of his own lostness. The obvious message of the circumstance is not necessarily *God’s* message. Paul and Silas were led on a crooked path to the jailer. By their unjust imprisonment, by not taking the obvious route of escape, God reached an imprisoned jailer and set him free. Perhaps it was he who was the man in Paul’s vision.

So what is this strange voyage that at times grounds us on the reefs of fear or snags us in the shoals of despair or leaves us adrift in a listless sea? What is this unfathomable Mind up to in how He charts our course? Perhaps it is only such a course that can expose where our faith lodges. Is it in outcome or in Him? Paul and Silas sang from prison cells at midnight. Sang with backs bloodied and torn. Circumstance never confused them. Never made them wonder where God was. He was in the praises of their hearts. He was with them as they sang at midnight.

God is neither random nor predictable. Nor is He a jokester. In the shadow of the Divine our journey often makes no sense. Eternity can never be understood as we peer at it from our antholes. Faith is the only response to the unfathomable climes God roams in. Guidance is **never** the shortest distance between two points. It often charts a meandering course, often is shrouded in fog; often cloaked in bewildering circumstance. Often beckons us into thick darkness; into storms or desert places where water is scarce and bitter. Into the court of the enemy.

When we languish in a windless sea it does not mean God is not there or that we have missed His guidance. Just because you are imprisoned in dark places or shackled to a wall of discouragement or defeat, it does not mean God is not bringing an earthquake to loose your chains. Just because the water you have so desperately sought is bitter, it does not mean it cannot be made sweet. Faith sings to Him at midnight. And then a voice rings out like a descant, “I am here!”...a Torch in our dungeon. It is the miracle of our midnight anthems. He inhabits the praises of His people, and He unlocks our prison doors.

I love you,

Notes from Pine Ridge

Travel Log

We pulled over to the side of the road near this sign marking the entry into Pine Ridge through the Badlands and prayed for God's will to manifest itself in this trip.



There is always the danger that as God's people seek to serve Him we will inadvertently slip into our own agenda, so this mid-July trip to the reservation was with the intention of reassessing our outreach there. My thinking leaned more toward the possibility the Lord might be closing the door than not. This trip was part of the "transition time" mentioned in June's newsletter in which we "didn't know what that meant or how it would look." Would the doors close, or would our outreach expand? The outlay of time, effort and money makes it critical that this be God's work and not our own. If it is His agenda, then time, effort and money are irrelevant. If He hasn't led us there, then these are not an investment but a waste. So we prayed for God to make His will so clear there would be no doubt as to our work there.

Landmarks: Our Woman at the Well...

In June's newsletter we told you of Lisa, the young Lakota woman who attended our "Woman at the Well"



retreat in Manderson and who asked, "what's a retreat?" Her husband was "into Jesus" but she didn't know "where she was with God." She was, we had said, "our woman at the well." Lisa greeted us on our return this month with a smile. "I tried to call you, but my phone won't let me call long distance. I wanted to tell you I accepted Christ."

The pastor of the large church that has been coming to Pine Ridge for years told me that our time there in June seemed to be "the turning point" for Lisa, making the words from June's newsletter grow brighter: "there will be those whom we touch briefly with Christ's love, but our greater desire is to pursue ways to have more lasting impact as we look for where Christ is walking on the waves of Pine Ridge and seek to join Him there." Lisa's conversion plus many new perspectives gained in this mid-July trip have seemed an answer to the prayer in the Badlands and that, indeed, it is Christ out there on the waves bidding us "come."

Points of Interest on the "Rez" Map

♦ **Sites of White Invasion.** Large armies of whites invade the reservation each summer, prompting some native on-lookers to comment, "here come the white vans." These 21st century prairie schooners roll in from churches, stay a week and then pull out for another year. "Sometimes the numbers are overwhelming, even for us, and I just want to go home and hide," the pastor's wife related over lunch. "Our people get connected with them and when they drive away for a year, it is very hard. It would be far better if they could come in small groups every three months..."

♦ **Good Deed Tracks.** Building out-door covered meeting areas. Building ramps and storage sheds. Painting rooms or houses. Creating rooms in a church basement. Fixing plumbing. Installing water lines.

♦ **Sobriety Massacre Site.** In talking with a native who had gone without a drink for 3 years, a "missionary" pastor told him there wasn't anything wrong with an occasional drink. This Lakota man listened and is now held captive, once more, by full-blown alcoholism. "And that story is not the worst," the pastor lamented. "I wish I could stand at the entry to Pine Ridge and bar some well-intentioned people from coming in who don't know what they're doing."

Vistas: What Does This Look Like for Us?

†† **Our small size fits with sending small groups** every three months when possible to sustain connection and relationship and to equip.

†† **We will train and equip where we can.** A great need is to teach skills so they can help themselves and serve their community. Everyone does *for* them rather than equipping them to help themselves.

†† **As early as October we hope to send a team** of 2-3 men who can teach basic construction, and let them help build, a storage shed and do other repairs. This will be an on-going focus in fulfilling "project hope."

†† **We will continue spiritual focus** through retreats and other settings in both Manderson and Sharp's Corner that will also allow us to --

†† **Help them access God's power in their daily lives and develop life-skills** to better deal with the losses and challenges they face.

†† **Be supportive in every way possible** of the pastor and wife team in Manderson. They are **God's footing on the reservation** as they live among the Lakota people as salt and light.

It does, indeed, seem that God's hand is parting the waters as we are seeing new ways to touch lives and impact eternal destinies in a broken place.

Pine Ridge Post Script

The previous page carries but a sketch of the sense of guidance that came back with us from the reservation. We're exploring possible options for establishing a larger, more consistent presence there by next summer.

Surprise Turns

There were two unexpected but happy bends in the road for us. The possibility of our conducting VBS seemed remote and almost overwhelming for our limited resources, though we could not know for sure until we saw for ourselves. After visiting with the coordinator for the church who was conducting VBS there it became clear what we could and could not do and what we didn't need to do. The other surprise was a desire from Sharp's Corner Church for a women's retreat there **this October**. Though totally unexpected, this would give the opportunity to focus on spiritual principles and life-skills not only there but as follow-up in Manderson.

Though there are some who have reservations about our outreach to the Lakota Sioux, there are others who have a passion for the people there. All evangelical and mission work hinges on a personal, individual summons by Christ. Were the 11 disciples who remained in the boat any less followers of Christ than Peter? Was Peter out on his own in some reckless diversion? The answer to both is no. Christ bid Peter come. He had already bid the others to follow. One was out on the waves of faith. The others were in the boat of faith. *All* (except one) changed the world. For those whose hearts are pricked toward Pine Ridge, it would be disobedient for us to remain in our boats. For those whose hearts are not, it would be disobedient for them to jump into those waters.

Yet there may be some whose hearts are pricked to help financially or in other ways. **As you consider** the extension of our outreach as outlined above, we ask you to be open to the Lord's prompting. Though the financial demands will increase, if He is leading, so will His promptings increase. We ask you simply to be alert to those stirrings within your own heart and be faithful to them whatever they are. It is through your response that His purposes will be accomplished both here and within your own life.

We are so grateful for the faithfulness of so many over the years to God's nudgings for His work with the Lakota people and anticipate the blessings to come as together we carry the hope of the loaves and fish to the prairielands of Pine Ridge.



Update

Legacy Book Club Selection

Hannah Whitall Smith's

Christian's Secret of a Happy Life

9:30 Tuesdays September 13 - October 4

Pat Townsend will be leading a four week discussion on Tuesday mornings at the library of one of the 19th century's towering works on the transforming power of faith. Smith's legacy of faith continues to inspire and guide spiritual pilgrims who seek to know God. Let us know if you would like to be part of this discussion.

"Sanctification is both a step of faith, and a process of works. It is a step of surrender and trust on our part, and it is a process of development on God's part...By a step of faith we put ourselves into the hands of the Divine Potter; by a gradual process He makes us into a vessel unto His own honor ... You have trusted Him as your dying Savior; now trust Him as your living Savior. Just as much as He came to deliver you from future punishment did He also come to deliver you from present bondage..."

Legacy Book Club is a new designation and venue for discussions of books represented by our Antiquities Library.

Home Book Club - Patty Stefani

Pricilla Shirer's

Discerning the Voice of God

For many years Patty Stefani's home has welcomed a gathering of women who have read and discussed an array of books that invite us into a deeper life with Christ. Pricilla Shirer's book is the current selection and though the discussion is in progress, the invitation is always open for anyone to join them at any time on Tuesday mornings at Patty's home.

"Beth Moore says that one of the ways you know Pricilla Shirer can discern the voice of God is how powerfully she proclaims it. It humbles me every time I sit down with these women to discuss and give God all the glory for the wisdom that the Holy Spirit brings to the discussions."

Note: Leanne Vlk's evening discussion of Relax and Let God, and Jaynie Lamb's group on Release of the Spirit have been re-scheduled for spring.

Macall's Diary from Greece



This camp is inside a warehouse. Each family is given a tent to live in, food and water, and basic clothing. Many of these refugees, coming from a middle class life-style, have had a very hard time adjusting to this way of life. Our team offers services in 3 different camps... clothing distribution, kids and women's support groups, survey and asset mapping, and we teach English. We have opened a **community center** in between two of the camps... a place for refugees to come so they can get outside of the camp and rest, use wifi, drink tea and coffee and enjoy the AC. Many of the refugees have said that being in the center makes them "feel human again".



This is my friend Shereen. I met her one of the first few days I got to Greece and we have been meeting with her multiple times a week to study the Bible

and learn about Jesus. It has been amazing to see Jesus reveal himself to Shereen through the Word! A few days ago we picked her and her family up from the camp and took them to downtown Thessaloniki to get ice cream and play by the water. It was really refreshing for them to be able to have a day outside of camp.

Shereen is really hungry to learn about Jesus and the more she learns about Him the more she wants to follow him! Her husband is not a believer and is not interested in learning about Jesus, so this makes it hard for Shereen to step out and fully commit to Jesus for fear of persecution **Please pray against any fear or persecution and that her husband Nazem would be hungry for Jesus.**

We sit down in the tents with the refugees and get to know them, build friendships, hear their stories, pray for them, cry with them and share with them about the good news of Jesus. Their current situations and the pain of their past have left them in desperate search for hope. It is with great joy that I have the privilege to introduce them to Jesus, who is the only true source of hope. So many of these people are open and searching. Many have already given their lives to Jesus and are meeting in Discovery Bible Study Groups. Jesus is taking what the enemy intended for evil and is using it for good.

With the Ancient Pilgrims Monthly Conversations and Teachings

On Tuesday evenings this fall and next spring we will have a monthly focus on an impacting figure in Christian history. Using a variety of formats from teaching to conversations and creative presentations, we will get to know some of the great explorers of our faith and the movements they inspired.

Our first Tuesday Evening is scheduled for
7:00 p.m. September 27

This format will offer the opportunity to be introduced to some of our rare books and to those who wrote them. This will be a creative, out of the box experiment we look forward to trying.

Look for more details in next month's newsletter.



Lending Library

We are steadily working on English reproductions of all our rare books in the Antiquities Library so you may be able to read them in our lending library. Linda Palmer is at work finding these books and others written by and about the great figures of our faith and the significant movements in our history: Quakers, Mysticism, William Penn, Wesley, the Moravians, George Mueller, Andrew Murray...

Linda's Memo

We have some additions to our lending library. First is the complete works of the Apostolic Fathers translated into English by Joseph Lightfoot. Now you can read the works of the Apostolic Fathers and see the wonderful legacy these early Christians left. Their sacrifices and labors helped to insure the purity of the gospel taught by Christ to his disciples.

I have also added "The Purpose of the Lord's Supper" by Peter Masters, a powerful little booklet that will refresh and enlarge your understanding of this important symbolic ceremony ordained by Christ.

Remember the lending library books are in the back room. They all are signified by green round stickers. There is a card in the back to write the date, your name and phone number. Leave the card in the box provided for our records

Note on Macall's Diary: because several of you support her work there, we will carry her diary entries as we can.

