

Dayspring Discipleship Institute

"...the ministry of the Word" - Acts 6:4

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Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

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"...the Dayspring from on high has come to give light to those that sit in darkness..." --Luke 1:78-79

Newsletter

Dearhearts,

When I was in high school we were assigned the play (or was it a short story?) entitled "Six Characters in Search of an Author." I don't remember much about the story except that it had to do with a quest and that I thought it had the strangest title ever. It has rather stuck with me over the years because, though strange, there is a profoundness to that title. There cannot be characters without an author. There can be no plot or story. If there are characters, there must be an author who scripted them. So the characters went in search of their author. Their quest became their story. So it is for all of us; as we go in search of our author we find, as well, our story.

Deep in the caverns of every soul there is a longing for our Author, a sense that, by virtue of our existence, there must be a Scribe who has penned us into being. Longing is a faint memory of Eden, of what we have lost. It calls to us of Home. The very fact we yearn for love means there is - somewhere - a source for love, a vine for which the branch longs. The scent of honeysuckle on the wind tells us that somewhere there is a honeysuckle vine. At times, as I have walked in the prayer garden and caught the breath of honeysuckle in the air, I've turned aside to find its source. That we are looking for belonging means that at some point we must have belonged, there must have been an original home. The monarchs and the swallows of Capistrano know that. Whether they remember or not, their longing beckons them home. That we all long to be known, and to be accepted in that knowing, tells us of a time and place in which we were fully loved.

So here we are in a foreign land. In a world that has few adornments of heaven; in a world that carries the smells of decay and rot, the pain of emptiness and loss, the fear of the dark. Into us, and us alone, has been poured the ointment of heaven. On us has been placed the charge to pour that ointment out on a hurting and lonely place. No one else can know they are loved as you and I can know that. No one else may

know of a place called Home. No one else may know, as we can, of a place of belonging and acceptance... of being known and fully loved. Unless...

God has written a story for us to walk in. Though the plots will vary, the storyline for all believers is much the same. We carry within us the adornments of Home. In the Spirit of Holiness that resides in our deepest pools is the very nature of God...is the embrace of acceptance and belonging, of being fully loved. In receiving this heavenly spikenard, we are asked to be willing to pour it out on the world. *How else will the world know who God is?* How else will the world know where to look for its author? How else will it find its story? If we think we are to bury or hoard what has been given; to save and not waste it, then no one of earth will ever catch heaven's scent in the air. We are called to extravagant love; to break the flask and open our lives. Of all people on earth, we are the only ones who carry a light that is not our own; who understand the language of our longing and who it is that calls to us there.

I look back on those who cast a light for me. It was not their doctrine but their spirit that illumined my way. It was their acceptance and forgiveness that pointed me toward God. It was their uncondemning love that gave me a place to belong. Their voices whisper to me now on the wings of an ancient wind...a Wind that ever stirs from an eternal heart with a message for our longing.

I love you,

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing...

II Corinthians 2:14-17

Prayer Garden Up-Date

Looking at Last Year

Last year marked the first time since the birth of the prayer garden in 2004 that those of us most closely associated with the garden were unable to meet the work demands and financial needs for the garden. Though mother-nature covered for us pretty well, much was left undone. This ranged from things as simple as trimming over-reaching runners from the antique rose bushes that covered signs and encroached on benches, fire ant treatment, and picking up fallen limbs, to flower bed management and fountain care. We are hoping that with the help of others this year, we can keep things running better.

Only one couple responded last year to these kinds of needs by keeping the bird feeders and baths supplied. Things like this, though simple, are immensely helpful to us. As you read this, would you take a minute to step outside your automatic response and see if there are ways you might be able to plug in that would still fit with your life and yet be of help with the garden?

Looking at this Year

Since there is no prayer garden fund allocated in the Dayspring budget, money for the garden comes either from our own pocket or from designated donations for the garden. As funds are available, the plans for the garden for this spring include:

- Hibiscus flower beds (These are already covered by a pledged donation.)
- A new water fountain pump
- At least six azalea replacement plants
- A flatbed of mulch
- St. Augustine sod
- “Bricks” or “timber” for building up the azalea beds
- Raising the flagstone sitting area in Riley’s Berm
- Re-finishing Scripture signs along the Path of Peace

Azalea Beds. Raising and building up the azalea beds appears to be a necessary step in improving their fullness. We have tried every other less-expensive suggestion from azalea experts, and none of them has improved their pretty wimpy look.

Refinishing Signs. Sanding, re-staining and coating many of the scripture signs is an ongoing work.

Please be mindful of these things and let us know if you can be of help in any way.

Workdays Begin March 28

The last Saturday in March marks the beginning of our annual prayer garden workdays. These Saturday workdays will continue through April with the exception of Easter weekend April 11.

Ministry Up-Date

Easter Week Reminder

With Easter coming early in April this year, we want to remind you early of our traditional Easter week observances so you may mark your calendar and prepare yourself for this time of observance and celebration.

Noon Devotional Focus (Monday – Thursday) on Christ’s final week

Thursday Evening Vespers / Lord’s Supper

Dark Friday Observances

Easter Sunrise Service

Good Turnout at Pureheart

Approximately 30 women are attending the *Road to Emmaus* Bible study Brenda is teaching at Pureheart Fellowship in Rowlett. Meeting Sunday evenings from 6:00 – 7:30, it remains open through the second Sunday in March.

Garden Guest Registry Being Prepared

The prayer garden will soon have a weather protected guest registry thanks to the generosity of a Rockwall couple. We are blessed by their interest in the garden and are excited to have such a place for people to record their visits to the garden.

Looking Outside the Box

In considering ways to extend Christ’s invitation to deeper paths with Him, we find ourselves looking outside our traditional box. Some of our considerations include:

- “Kaleo” Roundtable for those who are seeking to more effectively implement Christ in their daily lives.
- An *Evening with Brenda - Conversations on the Mysteries of the Kingdom*. Monthly gatherings in which Brenda would speak for 45 minutes with a short time for informal discussion. An optional hour of discussion and Q & A would follow for those desiring to stay.
- Holy Land Teaching Tour with Brenda.

As things clarify, we will let you know.

Brenda will soon be teaching two women on the “prayer of communion.” If you would like to participate, let us know.



The Sojourner's Quill

Transforming Love

Once upon a time, there was a girl who sometimes wondered if she was loveable. Long ago, others had made her feel not-so-special. Much to her surprise, her Prince Charming had arrived and was more than she ever had dreamed. One day, though, she was feeling particularly insecure, and wondered if she should tell her handsome prince, or if she should keep it safely to herself. She took a great risk and told the prince everything. Quite expecting rejection and even wrath, she was dumbfounded by his reaction. Do you know what he did? That prince put his arms around the girl, and gently said, "You are beautiful. What can I do to help make this better?"

Well, the princess (for, now, that's how she felt) was speechless! It was then that she realized what an amazing treasure she had been given. And she floated through the day feeling wonderfully loved. And later, when she recalled the kindness in his voice, she cried. Happy tears. And they lived happily ever after.

The End

This story turned up as I was going through my husband's things after his death in September. I had written it for him just after we married and can still remember the feelings behind it. Genuinely expecting his anger for some now-forgotten crime, I instead received the most beautiful, pure love. Never had I experienced anything like it. And it transformed me.

The truth is, deep-down I had always seen God as a stern, unbending Father. One who stood ready to condemn. With my head, I knew better; but with my heart I was mixed-up. God used Steve's example of unconditional love to move my head knowledge to my heart.

In John 15:12 Christ said, "My command is this: love each other as I have loved you." That's not an easy thing. I wasn't particularly loveable that day. Nevertheless, I was the recipient of Steve's obedience, and the impact was astounding. Just imagine the impact on the watching world if we, as the Church, all obeyed that command.

Steve is Home now. Until I catch up with him, my challenge is to do for others what Steve did for me. Demonstrate a loving grace that points to the Father.

-- Sherry Warren

When God Shows Up

"Through the Valley of the Shadow..."

As Christy drove back from Houston she felt sick. Taylor, the 16 year old daughter of a dear friend, had been waging a valiant battle for life at Texas Children's Hospital in the pediatric ICU for 6 weeks. Now on a ventilator, and with her kidneys shut down, Christy feared the battle was slipping away.

It had been a life-long struggle, and Christy had walked with Taylor and her mom for the last several years on this dark journey. Taylor had been born with cystic fibrosis. Three and a half years ago her mother fought heroically to find a place that, given her deteriorated condition, would even consider putting Taylor on a list for a lung transplant. She finally found one in Houston, but the drugs needed to keep her body from rejecting her new lungs set up a cruel ambush. It made her susceptible to cancer. A year later, Taylor was diagnosed with Hodgkins-lymphoma. It soon spread to her brain causing her to lose sight and hearing on her right side. Early last

spring, at Texas Children's, the staff battled to put the breaks on her skid into this deep valley.

Our first prayer entry for Taylor is April 17, 2008. The next week we noted she was to be placed on a breathing machine. On June 12 Taylor had taken a turn for the worse; she was experiencing kidney problems. When Christy called on her way home from Houston with the dire news of her deteriorating condition and kidney shut-down, we moved from intense to fervent praying, propelled by a strong sense we were to persist in asking the Lord to intervene with healing. We continued to pray intensely along this line for many weeks. On September 25 Taylor was beginning to improve. In early November she came home from the hospital and shortly thereafter the trach was removed. At this writing, she is doing fine and full of energy and life.

Until shown differently, we continue to pray for complete healing including restoring her hearing and vision.

Dayspring Web Site

Fingerprints of God

Adapted from Sub-menu page of **Reflections of God**:

Astronomers have been aware for a long time of two regions in the outer reaches of our solar system and beyond that contain massive amounts of ice chunks. The larger zone, known as the Oort Cloud, is depicted in the graphic at right as the large white sphere. It extends half way to our nearest neighboring star, about 2 light years at its farthest reach. The smaller band, shown as the grayish, elliptical region in the insert of the top left, encompasses the orbits of our outermost planets. It is seen also as the horizontal white belt in the center of the Oort cloud that dwarf both the solar system and the Kuiper Belt. It is from these two icy systems that comets are birthed as the sun's gravity eventually draws some of these "dirty snowballs" into a vast sweeping orbit around it. The number of comets (composed mostly of ice) which these combined regions contain is estimated to be in the billions.

The Question is: Where did all this water... this frozen water...come from? The answer is to be found in Genesis 1:6-7

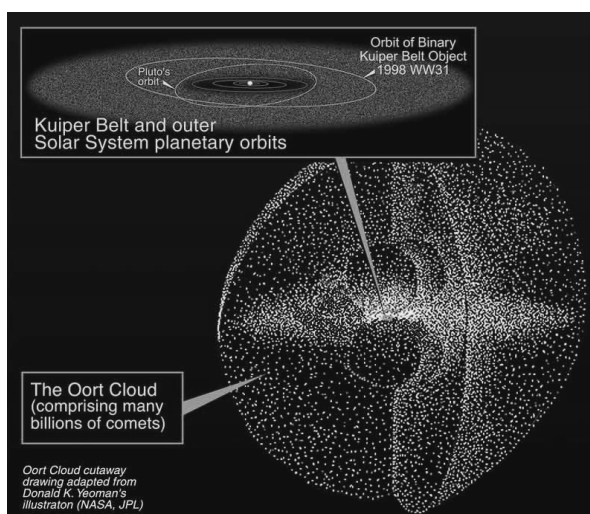
"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters...and God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament... and God called the firmament Heaven."

From Scientists' Quotes page:

"When I began my career as a cosmologist some twenty years ago, I was a convinced atheist. I never in my wildest dreams imagined that one day I would be writing a book purporting to show that the central claims of Judeo-Christian theology are in fact true... I have been forced into these conclusions by the inexorable logic of my own special branch of physics."

-- Frank Tipler, mathematician and physicist

Immense volumes of water...beyond calculating... existed at the beginning of creation. In the midst of the water, God placed a zone we know as heaven. This was not the spiritual heaven, but the physical heavens that we see enveloping earth when we look into the night sky. Beyond the physical heaven as man knew it...above and below it...were the waters that had been divided, or separated, by these heavens. It is here that we find the Oort Cloud and the lesser Kuiper Belt containing billions of comets.



God's Fingerprints reach out to solve a mystery scientists have no answer for: Where did all that water come from that created an endless swarm of comets in the icy cold of space?

For more insights into the amazing intricacies of God's creation and the impact it is having on the scientific community go to the Dayspring website and

click on: ***Reflections of God*** and its related pages: ***Fingerprints of God*** (plus associated link, ***More Fingerprints***); ***Scientists Quotes*** and ***Creation as Parable***.

"The heavens declare the glory of God...Praise Him you heavens of heaven, and you waters that be above the heavens...for He commanded, and they were created. He has established them for ever and ever." Psalm 19:1; 148:4-6

Response Increases with SAFE Pages

The Dayspring website has experienced a significant increase in activity since the pages on childhood sexual abuse and abandonment came on line last month. Our hope is that these pages will be a resource of understanding and hope for those who struggle, or who have loved ones who struggle, with these powerful issues.

We ask your help in letting people know of our site and most especially of the SAFE pages.