

Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

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

Newsletter

Dearhearts,

Recently, I heard a secular commentator on NPR radio trying to make sense of the fact that half the evangelical vote is going to Donald Trump. “It seems,” he said, “that we now have cultural evangelicals and religious evangelicals.” Herein lies the danger of our deep immersion in politics. Here, the danger of merging the interests of church and state... that we become cultural Christians, or at least, are seen that way.

As citizens we have a responsibility to be informed and to vote according to our best, Spirit led judgment, but there is great danger to God’s kingdom when church leaders publicly endorse flawed people - and *all* are flawed - in the name of Christ.

When the pastor of one of the largest churches in America endorses a political candidate, by whose name is he blessing that candidate? His own? Or Christ’s? *If it is his own, that is one thing. If it is Christ’s...that is another entirely.* If he is a religious leader his endorsement by implication carries the name and sanction of Christ. Whom is he seeking to sway and does his opinion carry power? He must think it carries power or he would not be publicly endorsing. And how did he garner that influence? As a private citizen? Or as a pastor? If as a shepherd, then his words seek to influence the flock. And for what purposes?

The history of church leaders politicizing God has *never* been good and often is catastrophic. Church leaders teamed with Roman authority to crucify Christ. The Catholic church merged with Spain to slaughter millions of Protestants with similar mergers occurring in France while Protestants in Great Britain killed Catholics. In Germany, three thousand Protestant pastors endorsed Hitler. They did so because they felt Hitler was Germany’s “messiah” who could lead them out of the desperate, humiliating morass following the Great War. National anger was high. Hunger for a deliverer gnawed in the German psyche, and Hitler found them ripe for a scapegoat. A vast swath of German Christians either slumbered or followed these priestly pied pipers into a diabolical alliance as they played flutes more of nationalism than of faith.

There is no easy choice this year in the Presidential election, and whomever we vote for will be flawed. Regardless of who wins, we are called to pray for them. Pray as sojourners on earth and as citizens of heaven.

When asked in a recent interview about the support Donald Trump enjoys among evangelicals, this mega-church pastor explained that the country has moved so far left a strong Christian likely can’t be elected so people are thinking “let’s get the most conservative candidate who is electable. And many of those are going for Donald Trump.” Even in 1980, he said, faith was not the “litmus test” for Christians voting for Ronald Reagan; it was the “quality people thought was most necessary at the time, and that is leadership.”

We are fighting today for the integrity of our faith, and we do so in a vacuum of spiritual leadership. There is a chorus of religious leaders but a scarcity of spiritual ones. That means you and I have a heightened charge to be wise as serpents and gentle as doves. There are wolves in sheep’s clothing. And there are politicians in clergy cloth. This is why we must “test the spirits to see if they are of God.” It is Christ, alone, through which we are to see and judge; the Christ who spoke of *reconciliation and loving our enemies, of blessing those who curse us; who warned of being of a spirit that was not His, that He had come not to destroy but to save; of admonishing that we cannot serve two masters, for we will cling to one and despise the other... who instructed that it is out of the condition of our heart that the mouth speaks.* But the blessing of multiple church leaders rests upon one who has said:

Knock the crap out of him, seriously ♦ You can never be too greedy ♦ Laziness is a trait in the blacks...I have Black guys counting my money! I hate it ♦ is a pig...a disgusting animal ♦ I think apologizing’s a great thing, but you have to be wrong. I will absolutely apologize, sometime in the hopefully distant future, if I’m ever wrong.

Such words are the opposite of Christ. Yet those in spiritual authority are endorsing in the name of the Blesser one who is a curser of others. Herein lies the danger of the merger of church and state...Here, the proof that we can’t serve two masters. We will choose one. Whether we know it or not.

I love you,

Touch Ministry Tornado Outreach.

Touching a Common Cord...

Tornado Survivors Support Group

Meeting on Monday afternoons from 4:00-5:30, it started with 3 women, then 4 and now 7. The Lord seems gradually to be bringing those who need to share their stories with those who understand and in sharing...process.

Our support group will remain open until there is no need for it. Please let anyone know whom you think might benefit from it.. Brochures are available at the ministry office.

Adopting a Family

They are a family Susan Raines, along with Mary Jane Brawand, has found as they have been working with already existing Tornado relief efforts in Rowlett. Susan has been regularly checking for us to be sure people are not dropping through the cracks in the remarkable network of aid that has developed through churches, non-profits and the city. Erin and Robert and their four children lived in a second and third floor condominium along I30 in Garland when the tornado hit and left them with only Erin's purse. The two older children were with their Dad at a movie. The mother and their one and two year old children hid in a closet on the second floor and crawled out unharmed. We will be walking alongside them as a resource for needs beyond their reach. Playing a key role in this, Susan reflects on helping Rowlett's tornado victims:

"In the aftermath of the December 26 tornado...I have felt so many emotions and feelings. I am so blessed having been spared any damage to my home and my daughter's home both here in Rowlett. I have also been moved by what I have seen being done for others. So much devastation, and in turn, so much love and compassion. Neighbors helping each other and just as many strangers helping strangers. Besides my own personal loss or tragedy that I have experienced in life, I have never seen anything so devastating. My heart breaks each time I drive down familiar streets and realize how the landscape of the city has been changed and how people's lives have been changed. I have seen the good in people and the generosity of the community coming together to help their fellow man. There are opportunities for each of us to make a difference. The damage has been done and will be here for a long time. It has been a privilege to help and volunteer in various ways and now we have adopted a family whose life was changed on December 26. This is just one of the ways to make sure each family is being assured of getting the necessities they lost and to be connected with others who care. It is a wonderful feeling to see God's love at work all around us. I'm thankful I can help in some small way, I hope if you feel led you, too, will plug in.

Next Lay Counseling Training

Looks at

Saturday March 19 and April 9

(Same material to be covered each day)

Let us know which date works best for you

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

*Thank you for your Prayerful and
Faithful Support
Of the
Ministries of Dayspring.
We are solely Funded by God's People
bringing their Free Will Offerings
To our Tent.*



*Torchbearer Series
to Study
Pilgrims of the
Night
7:00
Tuesday Evenings in
April*

*(St. Teresa of Avila / St. John of the Cross
Julian of Norwich / St. Francis de Sales)*

As we look at the remnant thread of men and women of God who regardless of circumstance passed on the torch of vibrant faith to us, we look at those figures within the Catholic church who followed Christ and remained faithful to an interior journey of the soul into Him. In *Pilgrims of the Night* we look at seminal figures who passed the torch of personal faith within the Catholic Church during the period of the Counter Reformation. The Catholic Church's response to the Reformation, it carried considerable persecution and emphasis on outward behaviors. But there were many who remained faithful to this interior journey of the spirit and have handed down to us treasures of the Kingdom. Not the least of these is St. John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, and Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle*. We look at them with gratitude for the light that has come to us from their hands.

St. John of the Cross

*The endurance of darkness is preparation
for great light.*

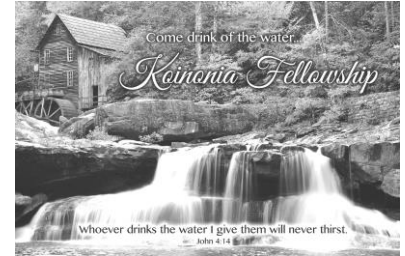
*If a man wishes to be sure of the road he
treads on, he must close his eyes and walk
in the dark.*

*Whenever anything disagreeable or
displeasing happens to you, remember
Christ crucified and be silent.*

To saints, their very slumber is a prayer.

*Koinonia Fellowship
8:30 Sunday Mornings
From Road to Emmaus III*

*"The spiritual realm
is absolute.
When Lucifer chose
the alternative to
God, He chose the
absolute absence of
God. There is no
gray, middle ground*



*in the spiritual realm. In rebelling, Lucifer was
rejecting all that God was and infusing the absence of
God with himself; making that absence a malignant,
life form. Satan now became all that God was not:
Where God was Truth, Satan became the "Father of
lies," where God was Light, Satan became the "Prince
of the Darkness," where God was Life, Satan became a
murderer. Total darkness became Satan's domain
(though he could disguise it as light); abject evil
became his calling card and deception his game. So
evil, hate, death, lies... remained no longer a benign
option existing in a vacuum. The vacuum had been
filled with a spirit-life and he infused the absence of
God with a pulsating life force that empowered these
elements with staggering force.
God is who He is and cannot act contrary to Himself.
Satan is who he is and cannot act other than that ...
So, now, we see Lucifer as Satan. And as Satan, he is
the totality and source of all lies, all hate and death;
all that is dark, evil, vile...and he now prowls earth
seeking to entice men to exercise their rights."*

*"Understanding, from this study,
God's absoluteness and Satan's deception
have changed the way I interpret events in life.
God is always about love, truth, goodness
and redemption.*

*Satan is about lies, deception and destruction.
His role of deceiving us into believing the
challenging and hurtful and unjust events in life
are from God's hand is one of his greatest lies.
They are actually from his hand.
We blame God unjustly.
Satan is the one to blame."*

Rebecca

2016 Pine Ridge Project Hope

In the heart of the Oglala Lakota Reservation of Pine Ridge is the village of Manderson, considered by Lakota residents to be the worst place on the reservation. But there is a spiritual community emerging there, guided by pastor TJ Jernigan and his wife, Janice. TJ preaches a gospel that is relevant to their lives and struggles. Together as a team, this Tennessee couple is drawing together a community with their love and commitment to the people there, and through their cook-outs and movie nights and their servant leadership. The result is that their small church is becoming the center for a burgeoning community of faith.

"It's hard to be a Christian in a place where there aren't many Christians."

Young Lakota Mother

Until now, our work has essentially been with the non-Christian community, particularly with the Pine Ridge school, but as we have done so, we have sought to find a spiritual footing on the reservation that could make a lasting impact. With that in mind we have worked for the past 2 years with Sharp's Corner Baptist Church thirty miles north of Manderson. The dynamics of that loosely formed community are quite different from Manderson. While we still are seeking the most effective way to have impact there, the Lord seems to be leading us to invest significant time and attention this year in Manderson, while still continuing our work in the school of Pine Ridge with Lynette Cuny.



Manderson Women's Retreat

June 3-4

The Woman at the Well

The first weekend in June will mark our first outreach with the Community Church of Manderson as Brenda leads a women's retreat there. Following the same theme as the Sharps Corner retreat two years ago, the Woman at the Well will offer opportunity for those who attend to look at the provision Christ brings for their deepest needs.

Pastor Jernigan has asked Brenda to work with the churches who are doing the Bible study for the mothers of the kids who attend the summer VBS so they can carry that same theme through their Bible studies to insure continuity of discipling for the women.

Girls' Volleyball Camp #4

Our volleyball camp goes for a fourth year to the high school in the village of Pine Ridge. Though the date for the camp has not been firmed up, we are looking to hold it in the same time frame as the retreat and VBS in order to have only one trip there this year instead of our traditional two.

Vacation Bible School?

Though it is unlikely that a ministry our size could pull together a week of VBS there, especially on short notice, the opportunity is available to us. For the past couple of years, three churches from Tennessee have each taken a week to conduct VBS, as well as Bible study for the mothers, at the Manderson church. They run consecutively this summer from June 13 - July 19. **The week of June 6-10 is open for us to participate.**

The challenges we face with this are many, the most obvious of which is the limited amount of time available for planning and preparation. Perhaps more problematic are the difficulties in communicating in a timely manner with those at the church. With that said, we are moving forward to see if these waters part. We would probably need a minimum of 10-12 men and women both, perhaps including someone who can teach archery (this will depend upon our hearing from the church to see if they are agreeable to our tentative plans).

VBS opens doors for more people from here to participate in the Pine Ridge outreach since specific skills are not required in every area, just people who have a heart for kids and for the Lord and can help with simple crafts and Bible stories and application.

If you are interested in the possibilities, please let us know as soon as possible as this will help us know how or if to move forward.

