



Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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

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www.dayspringdiscipleship.org

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

May 2009

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

Newsletter

Sacred Encounter

Dearhearts,

There are those places in our lives that are tipping points, the crest of a hill that marks a new direction ... moments in which change comes to our soul and alters its terrain forever. Alters how we see life, or ourselves ...or God. For Peter, it was the night of bitter weeping – and the subsequent encounter at daybreak with His Redeemer on the Galilean shore that restored to him his dreams and destiny. It had been the night that changed how he saw himself, but it was morning's light that brought him new life. For the Samaritan woman it was an encounter at the well with a perfect stranger who told her everything that she had ever done. Suddenly, life as she had known it was upended. Zacchaeus' sacred encounter came over lunch at his house. The woman bent over for 18 years was changed by a simple touch from a stranger on the Sabbath. Christ often sneaks into our world on cat paws, catching us by surprise in one glorious moment, drenched in the holy, and we are knocked off our stride... sometimes forever.

It happened to me when I was almost thirty. I had never given much effort to prayer. It was a mystery. It still is for that matter, but then it was a mystery without much experience...until God began to draw me toward it. The draw began with the realization that I needed to give God a chance to show me what prayer could mean. It went from there to a hunger for prayer. Intercessory prayer became a dominant wind in my soul. Sometimes there were hours of it...so alien to my former self that had found prayer no more appetizing than dry toast. But something of God's Spirit now stirred my own, and I found that the more I prayed the hungrier I got. "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you," now made sense to me. But the real tipping point was yet to come. As I entered into intercession for someone now forgotten, I suddenly tripped over into a Holy Place. It was not the room that was filled with Holiness, but my soul. Immersed in a sacred pool that had suddenly opened and swallowed me, my only words were "thank you" or "I love you." Mostly, it was a wordless place of Presence. Saul had been struck blind on the Damascus Road; I was struck mute. When, at last, the Presence faded, I found myself deeply saddened. I feared I would

not pass this way again. But the surprise was that this place could be found – and entered – over and over again through prayer. Though intercession remained, the Lord began showing me a new experience, an experience conditioned and accessed by prayer. I came to call it the prayer of communion, of fellowship, truly, with Him.

Though my first experience was sheer Gift, succeeding experiences were summonsed through prayer. In stilling my own voices and entering into a place emptied of my own agenda and open only to the Lord, this prayer chamber was repeatedly filled with His Spirit. Eventually, as spiritual stillness was cultivated, this interior prayer closet could be entered upon closing my eyes. This was a teachable journey... from one glorious moment of surprise to finding our way through the labyrinth of prayer to a hidden sanctuary in the soul where His Spirit and ours converge - and commune.

It is teachable, dearhearts. And it is a tipping point. Life is never the same as we move from sacred encounter to Holy communion in a completely different sacrament than we have tasted before. "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you." The sacred, and how it confronts you, rests not in your power but in your consent. Give God a chance to catch you by surprise in one glorious moment, and it may change all the rest of the moments you have.

I love you,

Brenda

Brenda will offer teachings on this process of prayer as well as guided time for entering into the

Prayer of Communion
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Tentative Dates:
Friday May 15 / Tuesday May 19

If you are interested please contact our office for details. If you are interested but these times are not workable let us know as well. ***If there is enough interest an evening session is an option.***

First of "Mystery" Conversations Well Received

Our first evening of conversations on the *Mystery of Earth* was a positive, energized experience for most, if not all, of the 24 people who attended. Scriptures covered in the first half of the evening stirred up insight and discussion in the second half. Sherry writes:

"Monday night's 'Mystery' series frankly left me with more questions than answers. But that's what it was all about - seeing Him with a fresh perspective, and longing for more. The more we learn of God, the more amazing and mysterious He is... I want to get my mind around Him - but it's impossible. The walls of the little boxes I try to put Him in shatter. He will NOT be contained in my small-mindedness. I love what Brenda said, 'Faith is the instrument that allows us to be at peace with mystery.'"

A Conversation on the Mystery of the Universe Tuesday, May 5

Our second evening of conversations on *Mysteries from a Sacred Hand* is the first Tuesday evening in May at 7:30. In *the Mystery of the Universe*, Brenda will look at the Scriptural possibilities of an enormous universe and the role that is playing in bringing physicists and astronomers to the inexorable conclusion of a Creator. A slide-show from Brenda's Kaleo Lodge "Reflections of God" conference will be one of two power point presentations included in this evening.

A break for refreshments will separate Brenda's hour long presentation from the follow-up discussion and Q & A. **Please register by phone with our office.**

When God Breaks Through...

Once God has broken through the "outer crust of the false self," as Father Thomas Keeting describes it, we never again see prayer, or our relationship with God, the same. Though these moments are alluded to frequently in ancient writings, they are little referenced today. It is only in cultivating stillness and quieting our own soul's voices that we can know His still, small voice and the profound experience of His presence bursting upon us.

On **Friday and Saturday May 22-23** I ask you to consider **setting aside 4 hours to spend in silence in the chapel or the prayer garden**. This is not a time for intercession or petition but for prayer that invites God's presence, that opens your heart to deep communion with Him. *I am available to help anyone desiring to better understand this kind of prayer*. A guide sheet will also be available in the chapel to assist you. *-Brenda*

**Please call our office to schedule your prayer time.
972-722-1905**

Prayer Garden News

Unexpected Donations Beautify the Garden

Beautiful stone borders now frame the azalea beds for the Garden of the Unborn and the Tabernacle Alcoves thanks to the generosity of three separate



donations that came in within five days of each other. All were designated for the prayer garden, one specifically for the stone border for the Garden of the

Unborn. The total expense for the azalea bed borders was \$1,498.00. The total amount of these garden gifts was \$1500.00!

Regardless of the efforts we have made for three years to stimulate the growth of the azaleas and thus avoid this expense, we have still been hesitant about the amount of money required to build up the beds. ***When the Lord provides so precisely it reassures us that this is not frivolous.*** We are so grateful to Bill and Robbie, Ruth, and Anne for being God's instrument of provision.

Young Life to Work in Garden

Lou Gill, director of Rockwall's Young Life is bringing a crew of kids to work in the prayer garden on two Saturdays in May. Last year saw a significant drop in the amount of time and money we could put into the garden, so the garden had to pretty much carry itself. Because of that, much more work is needed in the garden this year. The Lord already has brought a couple of new faces to help, but with Lou's kids we can get some bigger things done that otherwise would have remained undone for another year. We are so grateful for their help.

Load of Mulch Donated

A truckload of mulch has been donated for the azalea beds. Now that the stone borders are almost finished, we can complete the raising of the beds with the mulch. We are deeply grateful to the couple that has helped in this way.

A Surprise Gift: Antique Rose Plant

We have been blessed with an unexpected gift of an antique rose bush. It will be ideal for filling some of the gaps left when the fence on the north end of the garden was removed. Thank you Kathie.