



Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

May 2014 “...the Dayspring from on high has come to give light to those that sit in darkness...” – Luke 1:78-79 Newsletter

Dearhearts,

The religions of earth trace the march of man across the mystery of existence and chronicle his quest for God. His universal guessing that this Cadillac of creation means that some factory, somewhere, put it together. Even typical cynics in the scientific community find themselves drifting toward deism, at least, as they discover numbers that hold the expanding immensity of the universe together by the thinnest of gossamer strands. So thin many are realizing the impossibility of its existence outside of Intelligent Design. But before these foolish gurus, the rest of the world pretty much understood that creation portended Creator.

So Greek and Roman and Nordic mythologies tried to make sense of the mystery... caricature the unfathomable realm of grandeur and majesty in terms it could comprehend... and tolerate. Squeezing something so beyond their grasp into their own understanding... into their image. So the gods were warlike and conniving, jealous and ruthless, larger than life... yet resembling life. Grand yet petty. Through Shintoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and on and on, man sought God in terms he could understand; enticing Divine favor by a code well lived... virtuous rules that measure goodness and merit. And then came Christ.

For the first time in human history, a human life traced the march of God across the misery of humanity and chronicled His quest for man. No longer was man's quest for God fueled by a legal code or measured by performance or exalted by achievement. *God among us.* Man's towers to the sky were rendered irrelevant.

God had bent down.

On *His* terms. For *our* need.

With the exception of Judaism from which it came, Christianity stands alone among the religions of earth. It is not about man's quest for God, but about God's reach for man. It is about a relationship between God and man, and between man and man. And this poses a great challenge for the soul; especially the American Christian's soul that is so tangled in technology and tethered to a common voice. These days, we are more about winning people to our point of view through persuasion and debate than leading them to Christ;

through convincing them they're wrong and we're right. But if the life of Christ tells us anything, it tells us if the world would be reached, it is through relationship. Over and over Scripture speaks of us knowing God and God knowing us. More than any other faith, Christianity speaks of love because our need, whether we know it or not, is relationship. Christianity is about relationship. Man finds God, not on a pilgrimage to Olympus, or Mecca, or Lourdes or Medjugorje, but when he surrenders into the Holy Quest that stands at the door of his heart... and knocks.

Our American culture pushes against relationship and resists intrusions. You see it in restaurants where people sit, never talking to each other, hardly looking at each other, texting or preoccupied with their phones. You see it with people lost in their own worlds, ear buds piping surroundsound into their heads... keeping the rest of the world out.

We are no longer being programmed for relationship. We are programmed to fill the places hewn out in us for relationship with piped in music and surrogates of every sort. Doctrinal correctness substitutes for relationship and asking someone to church for evangelism. And we have made god over in our image. The result is a peculiar, mythological christ.

But if Christ is to be real in us, we must know Him. If we are to make Him real to others, we must present Him as He is... not a doctrinal despot, but a lover of the human soul. But to do that... *we* must love. We must embrace the inconvenience of relationship. We must turn aside for lunch with the despised of our religious world. If an unbelieving world is to know Him as He is, they must see Him that way in us.

I wonder if Jesus is wearing earbuds these days? If He is texting Himself right past people? I wonder if He is yelling to gays that they are headed straight to hell? I wonder if He is screaming at liberals that they are evil?

Or I wonder if He is loving them?

I love you,

Reviewing the Chronicles



Our first semester of study on the history of Christianity concluded the end of April for the summer. As many as 23 men and women attended initially with numbers settling into the 10-15 range following spring break. Chronicles of the Revolution will resume again in September following Labor Day and will be modified somewhat in format based upon the positive and constructive comments from the survey taken at the end of the course. Though we have not yet decided if the class will remain on Thursday evenings or be moved to Tuesday night, the fall semester will be broken into 3-6 week segments with breaks in between.

The first unit in September will focus on the forces emerging from the Reformation that were crucial to the birthing of this nation and framing its character and constitution. These forces fueled not only the spiritual engine of America but of Europe as well for two centuries.

The remainder of the fall semester will be biographical as we look at *The Revolutionaries*, those impacting men and women in Christian history who passed on to us the torch of faith. Their stories will both inspire and challenge us to look at the brightness of the torch we carry...and perhaps even convict us to pass on a brighter flame to those who follow us.

We were very heartened by the responses to the survey and energized by some very creative, dynamic suggestions. We look forward to the adjustments we'll be making as a result.

Please make plans to join us in the fall for our second semester with *Chronicles of the Revolution*.

A representative sampling of Comments
from the Survey.

"This has been a wonderful experience"

"[you have created] a great place for learning and reflecting."

"Lots of great material, would like to have had more discussion"

"I loved this study"

Book Club News

Dinner Book Club: Friday, May 16, 7:00 p.m.

Our second round of discussion of *Jeanne Guyon's Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ* is slated for the third Friday in May. A good group gathered in March but some who had planned to attend were unable to come, so if you would like to participate but are hesitating because you missed last time, don't let that stop you. You won't be lost (if you have read the book) and the fellowship and discussion will be a blessing. Call 972-722-1905 to reserve your place.

New Fall Opportunities

Roundtable Discussions.

Coming out of the *Saving Leonardo* format we have previously mentioned, we have decided to expand our discussions of books that evoke approaches and thinking outside our traditional paradigms. Chosen because of their perspectives on our culture and the implications for us in how we live within our culture, our fall "roundtable discussions" are designed to challenge the spiritual and mental complacency that can beset us all as we land in comfortable or familiar ruts. It's designed to be discerning of a common, "flock" mentality in which, un-thinking, we adopt certain views or approaches of either our secular or religious culture that may run counter to the Christ whom we espouse. *Saving Leonardo* is the first of these selections and will be discussed on two Saturday mornings beginning in September. A second book, *Land of Strangers*, has been added for similar discussion later in the fall. It speaks to the dangers inherent in this technological age of down-graded relationships. Of all religions of the world, Christianity is unique as a faith of relationship...not only with God, but with one another. This book, though not expressly Christian, sounds a warning we need to pay attention to, both as individuals and as a community of believers.

We are tinkering with other ideas which, as they are refined, we'll be speaking about as fall approaches.

Home Book Clubs.

Our Kaleo Roundtable has received such blessing studying Calvin Miller's *Table of Inwardness* that we are wanting to take it to a larger venue by creating weekday book studies in homes. Miller's writing style is refreshingly insightful. Look for details later this summer.

10th Anniversary of Prayer Garden

Late on a humid Sunday afternoon in June, 2004, a crowd of 25-30 people gathered near the chapel for the dedication of the Dayspring Community Prayer Garden. Only two sites, the “English Garden” as we called it then (now the Hibiscus Garden) and the Rock Fountain, composed the garden. Though there was not a vision, then, of how it would one day look, there was a sense that eventually other prayer pockets would rim the one and three quarters acre spot. We just didn’t know what they would be.

Riley’s Berm soon followed. Named for Riley Raines who died 13 years ago at 21, trees and other flora are planted as living memorials to those who have gone on to be with the Lord. The next to come was the *Tabernacle Alcoves*, an interactive area along the back of the office building that is patterned after the tabernacle of Moses and guides those who enter into a way of praying that can lead to experiencing the presence of the Lord through prayer.

It was not long before we knew we needed to create a memorial *Garden of the Unborn* where those who have miscarried or aborted their pregnancies, can come to forgiveness and peace and can leave items in memory of their unborn babies. Abortion recovery classes from Lake Pointe Church and elsewhere regularly use the chapel and this garden pocket for their closing ceremonies, often leaving our prayer guide box filled with blue and pink ribbons in their memory.

From a comment on the website: *“My name is Carolyn and I am post-abortive. God has graciously forgiven me and has allowed me to help bring his healing to many other women. As part of our journey we have a memorial for our unborn children at your chapel. It is the perfect way to celebrate their lives and the forgiveness that we have in Christ. God bless you for allowing us to enjoy the chapel and garden.”*

And then *Amy’s Garden* was conceived as people suggested the need for something for those who had suffered abuse. It is named for the sister of a friend of Dayspring who had struggled most of her life with the debilitating consequences of profound childhood abuse and who, at the age of 51, ended that struggle. So, a place honoring their losses and giving hope in the possibility of healing through Christ was created...a starting point for the journey out of pain and into freedom.



The *Garden of Gratitude* was the last of these prayer pockets to be completed, a place for celebrating the blessings of family and friendship...of gratitude to God. The *Rock Fountain* completes the circuit and offers a shaded, restful area for meditating on Christ as the Rock from which the Living Water flows.

And after several years...a Cross...a place of *Reflection on Resurrection*. A reminder of God’s power to redeem all things. Gay Bostick’s vision is emerging as reality here... resurrection at the center of the garden...at the center of our lives.

Come and Go at the Garden Sunday, June 8

4:00 – 7:00

Old Fashioned Pot Luck Dinner on the Grounds
Home-Made Ice Cream /Hymn Sing

(See June newsletter for details and any adjustments)

Gratitude to All Who Have Given

so much over the years of their time and money and labor to create this haven in the center of Rockwall that invites people into its peace and offers rest for harried souls.

Couples marry here and have their pictures taken here, and it is the place to come, now, for prom pictures. From those who kept bird feeders supplied with seed to those who purchased this property to preserve the garden and to all those faithful in between, we thank you from the bottom of our heart and pray God’s richest blessings upon you.

Prayer Garden Workdays Saturday May 17 & 24



As we try to restore the garden to its pre-drought vitality and to bring it to its best presentation in anticipation of the celebration of its 10th anniversary, much remains to be done. We would ask you to consider how you might be able to lend a hand. We appreciate so very much the added donations that have been made for the garden, allowing us to replace some of the trees damaged by the weather.

Please let us know if you can join us on either of these dates or help in any other way.

Parlor Ministry

“Blessing Teas” this Summer

As we began our “Parlor Ministry” over two years ago, we hoped to provide a place where people could come to read or visit, a place where those who might not have community could have a sense of connection. It has been gratifying to see it work. The Parlor Book Club also meets weekly here as do crocheting classes (where many items are sent to Pine Ridge and elsewhere) and personal, one-on-one discipling.

As we have looked at utilizing the Parlor more fully, we have decided to try something out of our box this summer with monthly “Blessing Teas.” Because the expense of traditional teas often excludes many from the experience, we want to offer it at only the cost of a blessing so anyone can come.



June: Dearhearts Tea (*Family or Friends or those in need of family or friends*). **Price of admission** – bring someone who hasn't been to a tea or someone who needs connection (if you can). Dress: as you want...from princess to peasant (almost).

Tentative dates: Friday June 13 / Saturday June 14.

July: Downton Abbey Tea.

Come in period dress or Sunday dress. **Price of admission** – a large or period hat and a card with favorite verses of poetry or scripture.

(We will have hats available if needed). *Downton Abbey teas will be served.* **Tentative dates: Friday July 11 / Saturday July 12.**



August: Mother/Daughter Tea. *Can be a daughter/mother/grandmother (or sister) substitute.* **Price of Admission** – a note of gratitude to your special person(s). **Tentative dates: Friday August 8 / Saturday August 9.**



If you are interested, we ask you to give us at least two options with first and second (or third) designations. Possible options for us are: **Friday at 10:30 / Friday at 2:00 / Saturday at 10:30.**

You may call us with your reservations and preferences or return the enclosed form.

Depending on the response, we will contact you confirming your reservation. When possible we will honor your first choice. Minimum age for girls to attend with their adult: entering 3rd grade.

If you would like to help in Any Way... with food or serving pieces, linens, dinnerware or set up...please let us know!

Pine Ridge Up-Date

Unlike last year when everything came together with amazing dispatch, it's a much slower process this year for our Project Hope Summer Outreach to Pine Ridge.

We have re-scheduled our women's retreat at Sharp's Corner Baptist Church on the reservation to give them more time for preparation. We will be going in September after Labor Day. The retreat theme is *The Woman at the Well*. There's a sense of excitement about our collaboration with Sharp's Corner because it gives us our first footing there in a spiritual sense. We are hoping this will open the door for many opportunities down line for spiritual impact on the reservation.

Our second *Girls Volleyball Camp* is set for the end of June (we are waiting for confirmation of June 26-28). Other workshops for canning and for horse care are less likely, though not impossible.

What seems more likely are some programs for kids through the school in Pine Ridge either later this summer or after school in September or October.

We are hoping that by June things will, indeed, be set and we can give you the full schedule in our next newsletter. Stay tuned...

Easter Week Follow-Up

A solid, though not strong, response to our Easter week observances speaks of those who sought not to miss this hour. “My hour has come,” Christ

told his disciples. The hour of his suffering...the hour that changed the world. Many who gathered on Thursday evening and throughout the day on Good Friday, expressed a desire to slow their lives and not miss what it had taken for Easter morning to dawn upon earth. In all, over 50 people attended the observances: nearly 20 on Thursday evening Passover observance, 13 on Good Friday and over 20 for Sunrise Service.

We are grateful for those, present or not, who took time to reflect on the meaning of this week, not only for ourselves, but for Christ.



Sunrise Service