



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

THE JOURNEY

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Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

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

Newsletter

Center of Gravity

Dearhearts,

My brother, having a genius IQ, was always showing me mysteries growing up. How to start a fire without a match...how to stand a pencil on its eraser and tilt it out over the edge of the table without its falling. He would always start these forays into mystery with a question....*do you think I can....* whatever. And of course my response was always no...because everyone knows you can't angle a pencil out over the edge of a table and expect it to magically dangle there. *I was smarter than that.*

Then out came his pocket knife. Opening the largest blade, he firmly pressed the point into the pencil a couple of inches above the eraser and asked what I thought would happen if he leaned the pencil over the edge of the table with the knife hanging from it. *I was no fool! Of course it would fall...*which it did. Then he took the knife and angled the handle about 30 degrees, then leaned the pencil out over the edge as he had before but with the knife handle angling underneath the lip of the table and passing directly beneath where the eraser rested on the table. As he let go, the pencil remained balanced perfectly at a diagonal from the table's edge. I stared in disbelief. *How could that be?* Some mysterious force had taken over, and what was impossible...wasn't...somehow.

That mysterious force was the center of gravity. The jackknifed handle aligned the gravitational field so that even something completely “off” hung steady on its invisible thread. The center of gravity is key to navigating impossible places. High wire artists do their magic aided hugely by the long pole held horizontally that makes their body the center of gravity as long as they are pencil straight and at its center.

I've known people who live at the center of spiritual gravity. Aligned with God, even the most disrupting events don't knock them to the floor. Things may be catywampus, but they still are centered in Him...balanced. People of grace and mercy.

In the spiritual realm, it is all about balance. Satan ever seeks to tilt the playing field. God ever seeks to restore the balance. That's why he tells us to love

those who hate us, to pray for those who misuse us. Responding in kind to affronts only widens the rip in the spiritual fabric. When we live out of balance we become disgruntled, bitter...controlling. We become edgy or harsh...judgmental. When I love those who are hateful or pray for those who are hurtful...I am mending the tear. I am closing the crack in the armor...refusing Satan his footing. When I forgive an injustice...I am restoring balance. Only as we are yielded into Him can we do this.

If God does not have His people who are centered in Him...to restore balance when the spiritual garment has been torn by losses or hatred, by skewed theology or distorted spirits...then strongholds get set up in us, or in our culture, that cannot easily be dismantled. And our religious pencil falls off the table and we don't even know it.

Martin Luther's theology about the Jews was wrong, but no one countered it. Though he did many things rightly, the lack of theological balance resulted, centuries later, in a culture that allowed the holocaust.

The Pharisees were theologically correct...they made certain of that. But their spirit tore a hole the size of Calvary in the spiritual realm. Christ's yieldedness from the cross...His forgiveness there...closed the tear. And there, hanging out over the precipice of hell, a holy knife pierced the wood and held a tilted world in place.

It is required that we be a people who walk in the center of gravity...balanced...aligned in Him; where even things that knock our world catywampus do not knock us to the floor. The world is tilting precariously. It needs those who can walk in such a place...maintaining our balance...and mending a frayed and tattered garment with threads of faith and love.

I love you,

The Revolutionaries
Second Semester of Christian History
Begins Thursday September 25

It is the individual that matters to God. It is the Ethiopian straining to understand Isaiah that commanded a trek across the sands of Gaza by Philip. The individual matters to God...and it is the individual that matters in the history of our faith. It is you and I touching others, that ultimately changes the world for Christ. That changes human destinies and lives. Not because we are that which changes but because we carry that which changes. We are vessels that carry what the world needs. We carry water to the desert.

The Revolutionaries looks at the great figures of the Revolution begun by Christ. Those men and women, some famous and others obscure, who profoundly impacted how people know Christ.

Counter Reformation and Quietism

This fall semester opens a window into an amazing period in church history that impacted the world directly for two centuries. Sit among the books penned by some of these very figures, see their works up close, as we look at St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross and Ignatius of Loyola of the Counter-Reformation within the Catholic Church and their 17th century contemporaries in the Quietist Movement, Miguel Molinos, Jeanne Guyon, Father Fenelon.

These, especially Jeanne Guyon, infused spiritual energy into the next generation of men in the 18th century who were instrumental in the Great Awakening of Europe and America. It was this Awakening that created the conditions essential for the birthing of America and for the worldwide missionary wave of the 19th century.

The world was changed because of this cluster of individuals who said yes to carrying the torch of faith and passing it on to those in their time...and in ours.

This will be an inspiring journey into lives of commitment and devotion, of struggle and triumph. Come seeking to know who they were and what it was they carried. Come seeking the one whose torch they bore.

Beginning Thursday September 25
7:00 p.m.

Dayspring Antiquities Library
Contact the Dayspring Office to Register

Christian Antiquities Library
Update

Dayspring's Antiquities Library brings together a collection of rare Christian books that mark the journey of our faith through the centuries. Previously scattered throughout the world, they have now found a home in Rockwall. Dating as far back as the infancy of 1510, they represent impacting voices of from the Apostolic Augustine and St.



St. John of the Cross

far back as printing, some of the our faith: Fathers to John of the cross and Teresa of Avila;



Jeanne Guyon

from Jeanne Guyon to Wesley and Jonathan Edwards, William Law and George Whitfield to Andrew Murray and



William Law

Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

A donation last year by Doug Kaufmann of a 1600 Gutenberg English language Bible marked the beginning of the library; it will occupy a key position in the overall collection.

Some of these books can be read in the library, though many are too fragile to do so. Because of their age, many are not in English. France was a center of printing in the 1600's which is when many of our books were printed. Where possible, we have selected English versions.

Because of the complexities surrounding the preparation and presentation of the displays we can only offer a target of late October for our open house. Next month's newsletter will carry more details.

As Part of Our On-Going Course on
The Revolutionaries

We will Incorporate Studies of Some of their
Writings

J. Guyon / Wm. Law / St. Teresa / A. Murray

Pine Ridge Perspectives



All our battles carry a component of the unseen. So what is addressed here related to Pine Ridge also has application to our personal lives in the sense that spiritual warfare carries common principles and is fought with common weapons whether individual or cultural.

Behind the Scenes: A Hidden Battle

It is as though the light that is carried here is swallowed up like water in the desert. For over a century, literally tens of thousands of whites have invested their time and gifts and lives to try to right a great wrong...to try to make a difference. There are many good Lakota people who have labored over the years; who have sown and ploughed, planted and watered...and still there is no harvest in the land.

Jesuit missionaries came with the tribe to this place; lived with them here, loved them...created a school for them. It remains the only significant, but small, patch of impact over the century. Their revered warrior chief Red Cloud became a Christian almost a decade before he died through their influence. His great, great grandson, Oliver Red Cloud, who died last year when we were there, had become a Christian seven years earlier. And, still, a plague blights their culture with 80% unemployment and alcoholism almost that high. Abuse is rampant and diabetes epidemic... and men and women die young.

Was the white man's "manifest destiny" too great a blow for recovery to ever be? Has the shrink-wrapped land of those who once followed the buffalo across the high plains and into the Black Hills entombed the soul of a nation and cursed a once free and boundless people?

What is it that maintains this prison without bars? What is it that swallows the light that has been poured out here as though it never was? Though individual lives have been touched, there is something about the land that will not budge, that remains unscathed by hope. Why do arid winds still blow in a forlorn land?

A Battle of Jericho

It is likely the answer lies in Strongholds. Those places in individuals or in a culture, in which spiritual authority has been ceded to Satan by choices we have made or through abusive or catastrophic events. Once authority has transferred in these patches from God to Satan, we are held captive by entrenched, debilitating responses. In the spiritual realm, authority is everything. The will withers beneath it. Stronghold authority carries with it its own legal code and the mechanisms for enforcement. Hence, we see triggers that automatically prompt addictive behaviors.

Jericho is a physical picture of these strongholds. In Numbers, it and all the walled cities of Canaan are called strongholds. As Jericho's walls could not be breached by human effort, neither can strongholds be brought down by human effort. We play a role – a partnership – with God, but the power to pull down strongholds rests in God alone.

"The Weapons of our Warfare"

"Though we walk in the flesh we do not war after the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." II Cor. 10: 3-4

There are clear strongholds in Pine Ridge of addiction, of hopelessness, of suicide and destruction for starters. There is need for powerful weapons to come against these dark fiefdoms on behalf of a captive people.

Binding the Strong Man

In Matthew 12, Christ speaks of the necessity of "binding the strong man before his possessions can be taken." The "strong man" is Satan. His possessions are those places in our personality or behaviors that seem to operate outside our control. The "ruler" of this "principality" (Eph. 6), or stronghold, must be bound before Christ can come in as a thief in the night to take back what has been stolen. How is this done?

It is done through spiritual weapons which include prayer and responses of the spirit as God's people obey His directives. It is important to note that **God never asks us to do what we cannot do.** There are places in personal strongholds where we cannot obey; that is their nature. Obedience that serves as a binding agent will entail those things we *can* do. God's job is to do what we cannot. As in Jericho, the children of Israel could march...and they could shout. They could not breach the wall.

I believe that more than a century of pouring out by God's people (and others) has not gone unnoticed or without impact. His word does not come back void. I believe that all those sacrifices have been part of the binding of the strong man in Pine Ridge. *But how can that be, one might ask, when it still is such a mess?*

What remains is the shout.

A Sacred Shout

Seven times in a week, then seven times in a day they walked around Jericho...and nothing happened. Except exhaustion. But it was something they were able to do.

And then the shout... and everything changed.

Jericho is the physical picture of the stronghold of earth where Satan temporarily rules. Every day for seven days, the priests blew their rams horns and the people marched in silence. The blowing of the horns in Jewish culture was the call for assembly and for battle. On the seventh day, at the end of their marching, all the people shouted with a loud voice...and the walls of Jericho came down, and the people "ascended up" to take the city. In the end days, the seventh trumpet will sound and there will be a shout of the archangel and the walls of the stronghold of earth will fall and all God's people will ascend up to assemble with Christ, and the final battle will be fought as the "kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

Despite all the marching of God's people, the walls of the strongholds in Pine Ridge still have not come down. Heaven's shout here, now, is not the voice of the archangel but the voice of prayer.

It is time for prayer...but in a new way

Stronghold Intercession

Remember that your prayers related to strongholds are coming at the forces behind the scenes...the real issues, not the presenting issues. It is the disease rather than the symptom that prayer attacks.

Let God refine your prayers and adjust them as you continue in them, whether it is for loved ones or otherwise. You are praying in opposition to the spiritual "rulers in high places and their principalities" where their rules are enforced.

Persevere. It is a thick, high wall you are coming against...an entrenched system. Unseen activity is occurring as you encircle the stronghold with your prayers and draw the noose. **Persevere.** Your prayers are seeking not only to bring something down but to go in and take the enemy's domain. **Persevere.** Through your prayers God is seeking to establish **His Kingdom Authority.** Spiritual resistance is greatest at the point of breakthrough.

Remember, you are doing battle with prayer, and God is accomplishing His ends through our partnership with Him through prayer.

We ask your Prayers for the Pine Ridge Retreat that the Lord would --

- Remove obstacles that would hinder them from coming and prepare their hearts for truth
- Clear any disruptive chaos and confusion
- Open hearts to be touched by the spirit
- Establish His Kingdom Authority on the reservation through a vibrant community of faith.

This last is most crucial in creating a spiritual base from which God's authority can begin to break the legal codes of the reservation strongholds.

The Mystery of Curse and Blessing

A strange scene takes place in the pages of Numbers 22-23 in which the King of Moab takes Balaam to 3 separate high places to curse the children of Israel as they pass through his land below. "I will go and see what God wants," he told Balak each time, and each time God's instruction was the same. Not only was he *not* to curse, he was to speak a blessing over the Israelites they would never hear. What is striking is that God did not just instruct Balaam to refrain from evil, but to speak good into the air.



There are profound implications here of a power we do not understand. What is the power of the spoken, or prayed, word to bless? To curse? It isn't about casting a spell as in a witch's brew. It is about a fabric of messages that can blanket a land, or a heart, that may be "felt" or may simply form an invisible spiritual curtain that accessorizes a stronghold. Could it be that a blessing so spoken or prayed might begin to rend that curtain, or more profoundly, create new window treatments for the soul in which a person, or a people, might actually begin not only to break free from a soulish blight, but perhaps to step into blessing?

I have no idea! However...

The only way we can ever know is to enter into an *experiment in prayer.* The prayer of blessing. This can be for individuals and loved ones. And it can be for Pine Ridge. What role does a prayer of blessing play in breaking the legal code of a stronghold? What role does this invisible legal code play in establishing and maintaining a "curse"? Clearly the Lakota land is cursed – immobilized from pursuing life. Held by some invisible hand in a death grip. Clearly there are lives we all know "cursed" by debilitating behaviors that imprison the soul and ravage relationships.

Please Let Us Know If You Would Like to Join this

Experiment in Prayer:

the Prayer of Blessing for Pine Ridge

Upon my return from Pine Ridge we will meet to go over the principles in greater detail and to share the blessing prayer we'll all be praying for Pine Ridge and that can be used as well for personal, family needs.