



# Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

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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,

There are patches of lonely that exist in us all. Patches that may not surface until circumstances expose our need. Our need for others...our need for someone greater than ourselves to walk with us as we go. It is those places of empty encounter with loss...loss of every sort...dashed hopes and dreams; health; the loss of loved ones...a job...friends. Lonely places remind us of the limitations of our own humanity. They speak to us of our need for God. They prod us to reach for Him. They speak to us, too, of our need for others.

I think surely such a patch was there for Christ in Gethsemane. There in the olive grove, in his full human garb, there was no buffer of Divinity. He faced the abyss...alone. And the friends He had chosen to be with him during this hour slept in the lonely grass that held his blood charged sweat. And there to His silent God He clung. There in the empty garden He came to grips with His Father's invisible faithfulness...and with His own.

Aloneness is the only place where life's most critical questions are faced, our most arduous decisions made. It is alone that we answer the knock of Christ on the door of our heart for the first time. No one else can make that decision for us. It must be ours... only. When a loved one lies near death, the relinquishment of our hearts to God...and of the love of our hearts to Him...can only be rendered in lonely desolation. Do I trust, still, a silent God. Do I yield my heart and soul, or withhold it from a God who seemed not to show up as I had begged? Here in these lonely climes, do I still seek Him or do I flee? Do I still trust Him when He has turned up missing?

It is in the crises of our lives, even if surrounded by family and friends, that we still, alone, make destiny choices. Choices of what I will believe...and whom. Choices of what I will love...and whom. Though it is in the normal course of life that these decisions are institutionalized, they are always birthed in solitary places in our heart. When friends are unseeing or seem uncaring of our need, when they are sleeping through our night, it is alone, at the kitchen table, or in the car, that we decide whom we will seek. Will we seek our friends asleep at the edge of our world...and be angry at their slumber...or will we still seek a silent God whom

we do not fully understand? And what will we decide about Him there. Is His silence neglect? Disinterest? Or is it space granted for us to make the hard choices of our lives that can only be made in Gethsemane?

Christ came to show us, not how to be Divine, but how to be fully human. Christ needed his friends... wanted his friends. But when they slept, he let them sleep and sought His God instead. We were created for relationship. We are balanced by community. We are refined and honed in the pressures of relationship. Sharp corners are rounded there...our rough edges smoothed. Yet human relationships fail...or die. What is left is the One who does not sleep in the garden, the One who sends angels to minister to us there.

Here, too, He shows us of that need in others.

When we are snared in our own worlds, others sit alone at their tables, too, or in their cars, wondering what has become of what they once had of their lives or what they once knew of their God. These places are not just for us...they are for others, too. They teach us of their need as well as our own, and if we let them, they give us a new knowing of God. They remind us of the common human pool, frail though it is, in need of a bigger God than it has known; in need of hope that He cares.

Such places in our lives equip us to minister. They enlarge our hearts...if we let them...and prod us to look for those patches in others in need of someone who will not sleep through their night.

I love you,

*I will never leave you nor forsake you. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*

Heb. 13:5; Matt. 28:30

## *"First Thursday" Historical Conversations*

Our monthly historical conversations are a bridge between our major offerings each semester of continuing religious education courses.

### *Present Day Israel: November 7*

Join Becky Elliston this month in the Chapel for a conversation on present day Israel. The discussion will look at the historical roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict before 1948 when it became a nation and fulfilled 2500-year-old prophecy. The conversation will also discuss the conflict that has continued since 1948.

This will be an invaluable time for understanding the unique, intractable challenges existing in the Middle East today.

### *Touching the Muslim Community with Christ*

Rae England, director of an international Christian ministry that has engaged in humanitarian aid both here and abroad for over a quarter century, brings first hand experience in ministering Christ to the Muslim community. As she shares her stories of wartime Bosnia and her experiences in ministering to refugees that fled to our area from that conflict you will experience a rare opportunity to enter into the hearts and culture of a people few of us understand. It will open our own hearts to bring the love of Christ to them in ways they can understand and recognize, and it will offer the opportunity to minister to the needs of some of these families in our area should you want.

Please join us for a dynamic, stretching evening in the Dayspring chapel Thursday, **December 5**, at 7:00 p.m.

## *Spring Semester Courses Taking Shape*

The History of the Church will be the primary theme for an array of studies to be offered in the spring ranging from the Suffering Church to the Corrupted Church, from the Imperial Church to the Church in Search of its Soul. Teachers will be Melvin Merritt, Becky Elliston, Pat Townsend and Brenda. Her teaching, "If I Had a Hammer," traces the changes wrought on the church by its romancing of power through the centuries, while Melvin Merritt will examine the role of Irish Monks in saving civilization during the Dark Ages.

## *Pine Ridge Update*

**Blizzard Delays Pine Ridge Trip:** Last month's mission trip headed by local veterinarian Dr. David Celella and Jack Bostick had to be suspended due to a record blizzard that inundated Pine Ridge and the Black Hills with snowfalls ranging from 31-58 inches. We are looking to try again in the spring.

*"You inspire me," she told Katlyn, "that one day I might be like you. I'm beginning to think I really can be good."*

You may remember these words of Lakota teen, Nettie Bettelyoun, from our August newsletter. She attended our volleyball camp in July at Pine Ridge and was challenged by coach Katlyn (niece to Rebecca Drummond who spearheaded our efforts) that she had what it took to get a college scholarship if she gave it her best. "You don't understand," she said, "we don't try hard here. And if they knew where I was from they wouldn't give me anything." "I don't know of a coach anywhere who looks at where you're from," Katlyn replied. "All they care about is your ability and your heart... You can be a great player if you want to." Before Katlyn left, Nettie gave her a beautiful beaded necklace she had made and thanked her with the words above. In a recent tournament, Nettie was chosen for the all-tournament team and is quoted extensively in an article in the Rapid City Journal that is excerpted below.

## **Pine Ridge breezes to another Lakota Nation volleyball championship**

It would take quite an effort to dominate a tournament any more thoroughly than the Pine Ridge volleyball team did Friday at the Lakota Nation Invitational at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center.



The Lady Thorpes didn't drop a game as they rolled to their second straight championship with a 25-18, 25-16 championship match win over Custer. The tournament was initially set for Oct. 4-5 but was postponed after the blizzard swept through the area.

The Thorpes won the tournament last season but lost some key seniors from that squad, "A lot of people thought we lost people and we weren't going to be good," Lynette (Nettie) Bettelyoun said. "Everybody underestimated us a lot. To come and win this just proves everybody wrong and makes us feel good and makes us just want to work even harder to get to state. That's where we want to be, that's our main goal," she said. "This was a goal we worked really hard for but now we have other goals to work for."