

12.11.11

Walking Dusty...

teacher: Dan Crist

I am not a people-person. This is something I don't like about myself, and I believe it's one of the many areas that God is working on in me. But I am blessed with a sister and brother-in-law that love people deeply, and I have been able to see Jesus through their actions. I am often amazed how God has used them to minister to me and so many in our community.

I asked God to give me this kind of heart, His heart, so that I could see people like He sees them. I've seen a young boy in our community that had duct tape on his broken glasses in three places, and there wasn't any money for another pair. I've watched a young mom break down and cry because her live-in boyfriend assaulted her. Since he left, she was losing her apartment, and possibly her kids. One woman, a middle-aged grandma, spent Thanksgiving alone because her sons don't talk to her anymore. I was seeing brokenness everywhere, and I had to tell God it was too much for me to handle by myself.

It's easy to get discouraged and wonder why God isn't moving fast enough to help a person's situation when they're hurting. But Mother Teresa said, "When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed." I never thought of it that way; it's easier to blame God for his lack of action.

But when I see others through God's eyes, I cannot help but be moved, and I find my heart burdened for their need. It pushes me toward compassion, prayer, and words of comfort. A few times I've been blessed with the ability to help in other ways, too. Sometimes the need is bigger than what I can do alone. That's one reason we're in community together, so that we can share these needs with each other and we can respond with what we've been given.

In order for me to become more like Jesus, I needed to see Him in action. I saw that in my sister and brother-in-law. That's what the world needs, too. They need to see God's love moving us to do something. They need to hear our encouraging words and prayers. They need to feel the compassionate hands of Jesus. They need to know the hope of a Living Savior.

Questions to Consider:

The Greatest Commandment is "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37, 39) Do I find myself loving God more? How does this impact my neighbor? Mother Teresa said, "I want you to be concerned about your next door neighbor. Do you know your next door neighbor?" A man once asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" He responded with the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Dan said the Jews were waiting for their Christmas (their Savior) for centuries. How long have I had to wait for a promise or an answer to prayer? How long is it before I give up? What has God been silent about?

Like Zechariah, will I choose a holy, righteous life – even when God’s not answering?

Is it okay to ask “why” when God hasn’t answered a prayer?

I recently heard a pastor say, “We serve at the soup kitchen so we can invite people to church so they can hear the gospel.” What’s right or wrong about this way of thinking?

Zechariah was “upright in the sight of God,” even though his prayers for a child had not been answered. How do I respond when I don’t get my way with God?

Zechariah was told, “Your prayer has been heard.” Is it enough to know that God listens to me?

Dan described the tension we all live in by asking: Am I going to keep trusting God or give up? Am I going to look different than the world? Am I all in or out?

What is something I need? Have I asked God? Have I asked my m^group? Have I asked anyone for help? If not, why?

Where is someplace that I see a need? Have I prayed about it? Have I mentioned it in my m^group? Have I asked anyone for help for them? If not, why?

When I help someone in need I feel blessed. Why is that?

This month’s memory verse: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” 1 Peter 1:3

Additional verses: Luke 1:5-25, Genesis 12:2-3, Matthew 25:34-46

Reminders:

12.18 –The Gathering at SHU at 10am!!! “Hope is Born -Part III”

Join us this week as Dustin opens up the scriptures to us and continues to invite us into the Hope-Filled story of God and His amazing love for His children! Also meet and experience the 1MOSAIC College Life worship leaders and join us in our “4 the City” Christmas blessing! See you Sunday morning.

12.24 –Christmas Eve (morning) Gathering at SHU at 10am!!! “Hope is Born”

Finally, we end our month with a Christmas celebration on Christmas Eve morning. Hope is born! That is the reason millions of people take part in Christmas, but have we missed it? Come take a deeper look with us!