

12.05.10

Walking Dusty...

teacher: Dan Crist

Have you ever felt like you weren't good enough? Perhaps you felt underdressed, overweight, or inadequate. Maybe you thought that other people's relationships were better than yours. I don't know if it was my lack of spiritual training or the fact that I didn't have it all together, but I've even felt this way around other Christians. I think this is Satan's way of making us feel inadequate so we think that God could never use us.

I know a beautiful, young woman that God called to be a missionary. She is single and is passionate about Jesus. She has a bubbly personality and a gorgeous smile. She was raised in a home where the Bible was its foundation. I figured she must be really special in order for God to call her to serve Him overseas. After all, she had a spiritual heritage that went back for generations. She even went to Bible school after college to get more training! I knew this young woman wasn't perfect, and yet she had so much more for God to use than what I had to offer. At least that's what I thought.

Jesus could have gone to a large city or university to pick the most educated, well-dressed, and cultured men to be his disciples, but he didn't. He got them from Galilee where they were known to speak with a peculiar dialect. Galileans were considered "ignorant, rude, uncivilized, and outlandish. They were blamed for neglecting the study of their language, and charged with errors in grammar and ridiculous mispronunciations." (www.bible.cc) When the "God-fearing Jews" from Acts 2 referred to "the Galileans," it was a form of disapproval. And yet that is the group of men God chose to change the world. Perhaps there were times when they felt they weren't good enough, and yet they were chosen. Through the working of the Holy Spirit, less than one hundred years later, eleven disciples grew into about 25,000 Christians. God's Spirit is powerful! He used ordinary men to accomplish an extraordinary mission. And He still does that today. If you talk to my missionary friend, she would say she feels inadequate, too. The needs in this world are too great for one person. But because of Jesus, we can be used in powerful ways. In fact it's as if He delights in using us to do what we think is impossible.

I may not travel overseas as a missionary, but God wants to use me in my own little part of this world. I can serve within my family or volunteer at youth organizations, nursing homes, or homeless shelters. I can pray for hurting communities, missionaries, or the frazzled mom at the grocery store. I can support a struggling student, make a meal for a family, or encourage a fellow employee. God can use me even though I don't have the "right" background or "proper" education. The vision of 1Mosaic is zero. We will keep following our Rabbi until there are no homeless, no hurting, no helpless, no hopeless . . . We need to stop thinking we're not good enough and allow God to use us to change our homes, our communities, and the world.

Questions to consider:

The “God-fearing Jews” were amazed at what God was doing through the Galileans. What do we need to do so that people would be amazed by our life?

Have we accepted God’s forgiveness and allowed Him to use us?

Do we realize that God can use our story of brokenness to bless someone and bring about healing?

Who are a few people God has been pressing onto your heart that you need to connect with over the Christmas season? Why? Will you? When?

What are a few tangible ways in which you can live out the love and passion of Jesus this Christmas season? It may just leave people asking, “have you had too much wine?”

This Week’s Memory Verse: *“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:3) Or... “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” (1 John 3:1)*

Additional Scripture to Read: Acts 2, 2 Corinth. 5:17, Gal. 6:15, Col. 2:6-15

REMINDERS:

**1MOSAIC – is committed to fill the week of December 6 – 13 at Share the Warmth!!! Please pray that the guests would see Jesus in us. Feel free to read the STW reflection below.

December 12 – The Gathering at SHU at 6 pm!

December 19 – **3rd:culture** night! Bring all “blessings” from the needs board to SHU by 6pm. We will leave from there to deliver the surprises to the families. More info on the WEB!

December 24 – Christmas Eve Gathering at SHU at 6 pm! Bring some family or friends.

December 26 – No Gathering; enjoy time with your family being the church!

January 2, 2011 – The Gathering at SHU at 6 pm! Let’s talk about our VISION for this year.

A reflection from a night at Share the Warmth...

Sitting in a small room that I would normally say needs to be redecorated bad. But tonight is different because tonight this tiny space is a sanctuary. Within this 10'x10' four walls I can hear a peaceful sound of grown adults sleeping. And even though I have been here for two hours, the distinct smell of alcohol is so strong that I can nearly taste it. I am sharing this sanctuary with two other people that I have just met tonight. So far it is apparent that the only commonality is our love for people who's life is laced with heartache and sadness. The men and women sleeping here tonight are people - sons and daughters of the God that made them. They are children who became overwhelmed with the challenges that life offers and sometimes appoints to us. They are a collection of consequences from their own choices as well as the pain that chose them. They are addicts, veterans, and fathers. They are Charlie, Mark, Brian, Dee, Bob . . .

I have two babies. Both are at home sleeping in beds. These adults are sleeping on army cots that would not even be used as roll aways at even the cheapest hotel. Back to the babies. My children are tucked into cribs that have coordinating sheets with their curtains. They have individual heaters set to a thermostat of 72 degrees. They have clothes hanging in order of seasons, colors and size. They have monitors that allow us to see them and also watch their heartbeat with the flicker on the screen. They have nightlights, teddy bears and cd players that lull them to sleep, even after they have been rocked, sang to and prayed with.

The point?

Simply, I am honored to be here and humbled so intensely that I can feel a physical ache in the middle of my soul. I am a selfish person. I fight daily for my own righteousness and daily I lose. In spite of the immensity of blessing that I am often times ashamed of i.e. our home, my family, our cars, our lifestyle somehow I find my way back to ungratefulness every day. I find my way back to discontentment. I wander back to the desire for even more comfort. I want things that my sweet friends sleeping in the other room would never dream of. I loathe over the 'modest' life we are living and daydream about the days when we were able to contribute to our 401k and our weekly massage appointments. I remember the vacations that we took twice a year that we 'deserved' and start to head down the mindset of martyrdom. Oh what a good person I am to be away from the warmth of being held by my husband and falling asleep to the sounds of my sleeping children. If only more people could be like me.

Actually too many people are like me. We waste our lives centered around all that they do not have. Tonight I am broken and wrecked because I have too much. Our friends sleeping in the room next door, were thankful for an old gym floor, to set up their army cot, cover themselves with 30 year torn sheets and 1 scratchy blanket and 1 incredibly flat pillow. There is gratitude so strong for the most basic necessity, sleep. My heart craves to learn from these men and women. To appreciate my life. To remember that I am simply a collection of blessings that I did not earn. I am not better than these people. I did not create myself. Am I foolish enough to think that I entitled to all that we have? I am simply the product of immeasurable grace. Jesus chose the family that held me when I took my first breathe and He alone surrounded me with opportunity. My desperation to realize all that I have verses the selfishness that I battle daily is exhausting. Likely before the end of this next day I will travel back down the road of wanting more, coveting what I do not have and thinking as though I am owed something more than my next breathe.

For tonight, I'll simply enjoy being the church and the heartache that will always accompany. God continue to give me your eyes, your heart and take me to the place where self is removed and servant hood fills the void. Do not get discouraged when my flesh wins victory over your Spirit. When my flesh wants financial security remind me that it's all yours to begin with. When my prayer is for continued health, urge me thank you for the days we have been given. When I get entangled in materialism, force me to give more away. Finish the work you are whispering to me and surround me with a community that will only allow me to be like you.