



PATHFINDER



Shining the Light in the Darkness 11/11

Dear friends,

“Newsletter 101” teaches missionaries to always stress the positive; of course I did not pay much attention during that class... ☺ I know many people familiar with the Native American plight watched the 20/20 Special on tv about Pine Ridge Reservation about a month ago. I would say that they did a decent job portraying our reservation. One of the few faults I could find in this documentary though was the fact that they left out any mention of the true problem here, i.e. a lack of the knowledge of God and His love for us. There is a spiritual battle at work on the reservation leading to the destruction of the Lakota people.

To explain what I mean by that, let me share some of what happened just last week. It was my wife’s birthday and we made some plans to leave for the day and celebrate. However, a few days later we received a call to officiate a wake at the Rec. A wake is a funeral service that can go for two nights and three days. This particular wake was only an overnigher, but that didn’t make it any easier since it was for a 6 month old baby girl. She got a fever and went to the hospital to be checked on. The hospital sent her home the same day and she died that night. Nobody could or would tell me anymore than that.

During the night of the wake a young man of 14 was stabbed in his arm and leg by a kid a few years younger than him. He walked into the Rec and went straight to the bathroom where he tried to clean himself off. He finally made it home and was rushed to the hospital for stitches. The doctor told him had he been stabbed a little more to the right he would have lost the ability to walk and a little to the left and he would never have been able to have children.

Sadly, this really is “normal” here for our reservation. Sickness, disease, and death are just an everyday part of life. It was the third funeral last week in Oglala, and a few days later another young man passed away. And even while all this was happening, a young girl we know and care about deeply tried to commit suicide.

So I think those simple stories illustrate the darkness that is at work in many areas of reservation life. Satan is indeed a roaring lion and a cheap shot artist. He lives to destroy lives and no level is too low for him to stoop to. I trust with all my heart that young baby is in Heaven now,

but how many children, teenagers and adults are losing their lives every day and not making it to Heaven?! This is the true challenge we face in our ministry every day. It is a constant fight to steal lives from the grasp of the enemy, and too often it seems we are losing the battle.

To balance what was said before, the young man who gave his life to Jesus at the SROM trip continues to come to church. We have also gained four new team members in the last few months. We truly believe God has a mighty plan for Oglala or He wouldn’t be sending us all this help.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray ...

... and thank God for His great faithfulness, protection, and provision in our daily ministry at the Rec*Center ... for our church family and us for wisdom & strength to continue the good fight and to be victorious – we just recently (re)dedicated us and the church into God’s hands ... that God would continue to help us be a light in this darkness and to overcome the evil by doing good



... for Mary & me for oneness of heart and mind and a divine protection and blessing on our marriage
... for Mary’s Green Card process
... for the Oglala community for a spiritual hunger for God and that they will come to accept Jesus as Lord

Final Thought(s)

I hope you do not read this newsletter and sense any negativity from me. I felt compelled to write about the truth of the fight we face. This is not just our battle though; it is a fight every single Christian is facing every day. “Be alert and sober,” the Bible says, because Satan is waiting to destroy any that cross his path – but we are overcomers by the Blood of the Lamb!

Well, Mary and I still haven’t had the chance to celebrate her birthday. But this weekend we will finally get to go to the Black Hills for a day. As it is Thanksgiving, we also want to make time to seek and spend time with our Heavenly Father, for He is always worthy to be praised.

