

January 2017; words of grace



Outside of our trailer: steady snowfall and wind that made for a snow free day at school. Inside: me trying to get past a head cold, listening to sermons. One thing gets my attention: In Luke 4, Jesus is speaking in a synagogue and it says people were astonished, surprised by His words of grace. The preacher I am listening to raises a valid point: do we as Christians surprise people with our words of grace? How much of what I say to the kids at school is spoken with grace? I love those kids, care deeply for them, but is it obvious *to them* by the way I speak and respond to them?

There's no doubt that the kids at our school need gracious words. Reading the answers to an essay question about what I had missed while I was gone over the Christmas break, some were telling of Christmas presents, sleepovers and the freedom to stay up all night. In short: "the coolest three weeks ever". One of my students however wrote about her little niece, 9 years old, who was raped during the Christmas break. *words of grace*, we all need them. Whether I am lost for words because of what the kids go through, or because a student isn't responding to correction no matter what the approach, I want to be that person that offers words of grace.

On to lighter matters: After a semester of learning and growing, parents, grandparents and friends came to our annual Christmas Program to celebrate everything the kids accomplished, and of course Christmas! My kids prepared a jeopardy style quiz for the crowd, sharing a bit of what we've learned in class - how different people in the world live, how differently even one and the same holiday is celebrated throughout the world. Who would have guessed that the preschoolers (with a little help from their families ☺) would win this one!



Now after the break we are settled back in our routine, and I have to admit, I feel somewhat inadequate thinking about this second semester and the task to help the kids get to where they need to be in order to graduate. God prepared an answer ahead of time; Eric and I had both taken Tozer's *Knowledge of the Holy* to Germany and have been re-reading it together as a devotion of sorts. In the chapter on God's Infinitude, Tozer puts it perfectly: "There is simply not time enough to think, to become, to perform what the constitution of our natures indicates we are capable of. **How completely satisfying to turn from our limitations to a God that has none.**" He is faithful, inexhaustible. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us" (1.John 4.16).

As we go into this second half of the schoolyear, there are many ideas that need sorting and evaluating. Pray with us that we would not lose sight of what our main task and calling as teachers and mentors is: to model courage, curiosity and discipline, and to shower God's love on our students.

Blessings from the Prairie!  
Ela Sutton at Oyate Concern in Oglala

*Putting Wings on Weary Hearts*

#### *Financial Update.*

Oyate Concern helped me to get a head start in terms of fundraising, my goal is to at least raise 800\$/month to be independently funded. As of now I am receiving 190\$/month in donations so if you would like to help me meet that goal, there's still lots of room for you to make a difference ☺ Pray about it and don't be shy to sign up for a small amount, God doesn't need much to do much, and I trust Him to provide. Oyate Concern does send out receipts at the end of the year so make out your check to the Ministry and you can make those donations count towards your taxes.