

What do You do AFTERdark?

November 5, 2007 | "This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." (John 17:3)

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My roommate and I on Halloween. I went as Kent Pierce, my mentor. I'm holding a Crusade gospel tract.

- Prayer Requests -

- That the decisions made at AFTERdark would not be purely emotional, but they would take root in people's hearts and minds. Pray for us as we follow-up with students, so we can meet their spiritual needs and help them grow in faith.
- For me, as I will be speaking at Chadron State College's weekly meeting of Campus Crusade on Wednesday, November 14.
- For our students as we start to train them in personal evangelism and how to effectively share their faith with others.

- Reflections -

What does it mean to be saved? It's more than a "get out of hell free" card. Being saved is more than a simple prayer people pray to "accept Jesus into their hearts." I heard a pastor once say, "It means the devil is socked by the Lord and the eyes go open and the foolishness of the cross becomes wisdom and power." Being saved is so much more than simple prayer. It's a lifestyle. It's a rest in the Savior. When someone gets "saved" they don't just get eternal life. They get a person—they get a relationship.

That relationship is with Jesus and it is the most utterly satisfying relationship anyone could ever enter into. It is the most satisfying thing anyone could ever know.

In John 17:3, Jesus said, "This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." According to Jesus, eternal life does not mean you complete a spiritual formula and you get to "go to heaven." No! Rather, what Jesus said was, "You get me! You get to know God! You get to know God forever and ever and ever."

To non-believers, even some professing Christians, that may sound boring. But for me, as I grow in my relationship with Christ, that becomes more appealing everyday. I want my Christian faith to be an intimate, deep, satisfactory relationship with the King of the world—Jesus! I want him to be my treasure. I want the idea of being "Christian" to mean that I get to know the God of the universe and his Son, who shed his blood for me, just so I can know him forever.

AFTERdark rocks the Lied; Fall Getaway a great success

The cross of Jesus Christ has a power that surpasses any other emblem in the history of man. The Apostle Paul said, "But may it never be that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14). There was a reason he wrote those words. The cross has the power to cleanse, redeem, restore, and to give life and joy. There's nothing special in the cross itself—after all, it's just a tree. But the fact that a perfect Man died on it for the sins of the world makes it remarkable.

On October 18, at the Lied Center, Joe White, from Kanakuk Kamps, spoke to UNL students about the message of Jesus' cross. He chopped notches into a 300 pound log and, in it, placed a cross-bar log to create a 14-foot tall Roman cross. He told the story of Jesus from the perspective of a Roman cross builder. After the dramatic performance, he told about life with Jesus Christ and that he alone offers forgiveness and love for those who believe in him as Lord and Savior. Check out more about AFTERdark at www.whatsafterdark.com.

For the next few weeks, we will be following-up with students who made a commitment to trust Jesus as their Savior and Christians who have recommitted to walk closer to God. From the response cards I have, many people indicated that they trusted Jesus as their Lord and Savior that night. Still others rededicated their lives to Jesus. Praise God for the fruit he is bearing in people's lives!



Before Joe spoke, Braddigan, a reggae/rock band from Denver played. Their show focused around the need for love, particularly in Nicaragua. Families live in garbage and literally live with less than nothing. Last spring, Braddigan played a free

concert for the village, in the middle of a land-fill, as a part of a mission trip in order to invest in the people of Nicaragua. Many people were touched by their story. In fact, two female students are hoping to go with Braddigan on their next mission's trip to Nicaragua in March 2008.

Just two weeks before AFTERdark came to our campus, we had our Fall Getaway retreat at Camp Rivercrest outside of Fremont. Finch Sprouse, on staff with Crusade at Missouri State, talked to us about having a passion for God's word and reading it and meditating on it daily.

It was exciting to see eight international students—most of whom were not Christians—at the retreat. The Lord is working in magnificent ways, and I'm excited to be a part of helping see our International Discovery Groups (what we call their small group times) grow as they examine the life of Jesus. We also had more than a dozen freshmen attend. It is so amazing to see young students take a step of faith and trust the Lord to work in their lives.

One student especially encouraged me on Saturday night of the retreat. Brendon Mizner, a freshman from Norfolk, asked me to help him with reading and staying focused on the Bible. How precious to see an 18 year-old who has a heart to know God! Now, I will be meeting with Brendon on a regular basis to dig into the Scriptures and discover the deep things of God. O, that God would cause all our students to have a desire to know him and his word like Brendon!

- Spotlight: Justin Faber -

There's something about Alaska that turns a boy into a man. I've heard that so often from friends who have gone on Summer Projects to Juneau, with Campus Crusade. Justin Faber certainly was no exception. Justin is a sophomore at UNL and last year, by God's grace, endured many hardships—not to mention going through his first year of college.

People say that you mature most in between your first and second years of school and for Justin, that only magnified after being in Alaska for 10 weeks. "I grew up without a father emotionally there for me, so project helped answer important questions in my life," he said. "We can't lead in society if we aren't mature enough. I had to mature quickly because we were forced out onto the streets to evangelize." The Lord honored Justin's faith and God has definitely been working in his heart so he can become a courageous leader and biblical man for the Kingdom. Now, Justin is a co-leader of a Bible study in the Abel/Sandoz dorm complex with two senior men. Learning from them, and other older students, has been a blessing for him. It started with his senior Bible study leader last year: "I'm inspired to help guys know Jesus because of them, whatever that entails."

I see such a servant's heart in Justin. During the promotion week leading up to AFTERdark, Justin was there every hour we needed help. Whether it was coming to meetings, passing out or hanging up flyers, or lying in an air mattress to attract attention for our advertising, he was available. The greatest leaders have been servants first—we saw that with Jesus when he washed the disciples feet. I know that in the years to come Justin will continue to mature and grow into a great servant-leader for God's Kingdom.

On the journey to know Jesus,

James



Photo by Matt Meschke, aka "The Bunny"