



# Native Sons



## Equipping Native Leaders; Empowering Native Christians

### NAVAJO HUMOR

- The Navajos love jokes especially about Columbus and Thanksgiving. One example:
- One day a white man traveling in NM stopped and picked up a Navajo elder hitchhiking. After some small talk the Navajo man noticed a brown bag on the seat. "What's in the bag?" asked the old man. The white man looked down at the brown bag and said, "It's a bottle of wine. Got it for my wife." The Navajo man was silent for a moment, and then speaking with the quiet wisdom of an elder said, "Good trade."
- Information from Navajo Etiquette from goingbeyondwealth.com, indiancountrytoday.com, and detoursamericanwest.com.

### PRAYER POINTS

- Native people hard hit by COVID-19 and COVID Restrictions.
- Guidance developing the CNLDs.
- Continued favor for Theresa at work.
- Locklear family in the loss of their 18-year-old daughter.

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### DELORES CADMAN

Delores Cadman grew up in a "Traditional Navajo" home. What this means is that her parents and family practiced traditional Navajo spirituality. Her parents used medicine men who came and perform various kinds of ceremonies. There are many different Navajo ceremonies and each has its own meaning and involves different rituals. Some rituals last all night, others all day, and still others as long as a week. Navajo rituals may involve painting the participants, taking different herbs, not sleeping, and so on. During her teen years Delores' parents became involved in the Native American Church (NAC). The NAC blends traditional Native spirituality, Christianity, and the use of peyote in all night "worship" services.

Delores says the Navajo "don't like to talk about death, owls, and the afterlife. These are taboo." Owls are considered omens of death among the Navajo and a number of other tribes. She says, "They (Traditionalists) feed you a lot of beliefs and you have to take it. If I asked questions I got in trouble and was spanked. Sometimes I was sent outside so I would not hear." Reflecting on Traditional Navajo

spirituality Delores states, "To me, Navajo beliefs and ways are scary. They like to keep you at the point where you're scared. I was raised in fear, but was never told why. You have to just learn to accept it. I'm



Delores Cadman

beginning to realize it is not all like this. When I first got saved it took the longest time not to be afraid of owls. I have owls that come near my home now and I hear them. I know they are just hunting and that they are God's creatures. Navajo people are also afraid of coyotes. If a north traveling coyote crosses in front of your path

this means death. People will stop for a coyote and wait for someone else who has not seen it to cross its path. Reading God's Word has reversed a lot of this for me. God tells me, 'I am with you, do not fear.'

Delores was first exposed to the gospel when she was very young. She grew up on the Rez and missionaries would come to her house and take the children to church on Sunday evenings. She says, "They used to have the kids say the sinners prayer every week, but I did not understand it." In 1976 her mother-in-law took her to church and "I understood the true version of the gospel. I was young and newly married, so I was in and out of the church. I would take our kids to church for 2-3 months, then stop, but would later return." Although she grew up in a Traditional home, Delores says that she has actually attended church most of her life because of the missionaries of her childhood.

On New Year's Eve, in 2013, Delores attended a church service with a Navajo

### ON A PERSONAL NOTE

COVID restrictions continue to hamper the first on-site CNLD & our post office cites COVID for the disappearance of books sent 2 months ago! Even so, the Navajo church in Yahtahey, NM has set a date to hold its first class in May. I hand delivered books & spent a couple days repairing the parsonage trailer. While working I discovered further problems so will address these in May also. I had hoped to revisit NY to itinerate this summer, but will not because of the problems COVID is causing the churches. Next year, Lord willing!

Theresa continues to enjoy the new school she is at. It is much smaller than the previous school, but well run. The school has just opened up its second 4-5-year-old class. Theresa is now teaching that class,, but it only meets in the mornings, so in the afternoon she continues to serve as a teacher's aide in the other 4-5-year old class. Theresa's mom is still with us, and will be with us until Mother's Day when she flies back to VT.

When we put our dogs down last fall Theresa

was adamant, "No more dogs." For me, a house is not quite a home without pets. In December she relented and I got a rottweiler puppy under the condition I also got a small lapdog for her. Easy "Yes!" Great Christmas presents! Grizz is our new Rotty and Bandit, aptly named, is the lapdog.

Levi and Alicia are doing OK, but please continue to pray for them. Alicia is enjoying working day shifts, but Levi is investigating other job opportunities because of changes to his program caused by Covid. Dillon and Torrin are both back in school in person full-time and are enjoying being back in class. I bet that is something you never expected to hear from a 8 and 10-year-old!

Caleb and Erin are well. Covid has caused Caleb to give up competitive power-lifting, but he continues to work out using a power-lifter's regimen. Erin has been looking for work closer to Caleb's home, but at this point has not found anything that

suits her. They continue to make burnt wood items including a first-responder flag that uses red firehose for the stripe.

As always, thanks for all your prayers and support!



evangelist. At 2 AM she realized that she had to get serious with the Lord. "I knew I had to get serious because I felt it in my heart. The Holy Spirit came upon me and it was quite different. I have never wanted to depart since then."

Delores' childhood was very different than life in mainstream America (Dominant Culture). There was no water or electricity in her home. They burned kerosene lamps, heated with a wood stove, and had to drive to get water and bring it back to the house. This is still the case for many on the Navajo Rez today. Because of needing to drive to get water, Delores learned to drive the dirt roads of the reservation in a standard shift truck when she was only 12. Delores parents spoke only Navajo. She was sent away to a federal boarding school for 1st and 2nd grade. Delores' mother made two dresses for her with different color sleeves on each dress to get Delores to agree to go to school. At the school, she discovered that they only spoke English, so she had to learn quickly. She says it was frightening being left there, "but fortunately the lady in charge of the dormitory spoke Navajo and this put me at ease. Halfway through the school year I got used to being there. I had my first shower there, was introduced to electricity, and saw TV for the first time. There were 45 girls in my dormitory and we all became friends. It was hard at first, but we adjusted."

After 2 years she transferred to an elementary school in Tohatchi, NM. She returned home, but had to walk 2 miles to catch a bus to school. The bus drove 25 miles one way to school and then

back, but at least she was able to return home each day. Initially, the school only went up to 6th grade, but later it added a middle school, and finally a high school. Delores graduated from high school in Tohatchi and went on to earn an AA in secretarial science. She worked at a bank for 15 years and has worked at the local pawn shop for the last 21 years. She has 3 adult children and 5 grandchildren. They live in Phoenix and Hawaii.

Delores is one of 7 adult students that have signed up to take courses in the Center for Native Leadership Development (CNLD). We will hold the first course, New Testament Survey, during a weekend in May at Calvary AG in Yahtahey, NM. She has completed various other courses under her Pastor, Bob Smith, including such subjects as spiritual maturity, the secrets of a prayer warrior, worship—the weapon of warfare and deliverance, and becoming God's kind of person. During one course on marriage she came under such conviction that she asked her pastor, "Pastor Bob, are you doing this course for me?"

When I asked why she wanted to take CNLD courses she stated, "I want to get deeper into the Bible so I can really understand it well. The Bible can be difficult to read and understand because there is so much information in it. I want to be able to answer well the questions that others ask about the Bible." Delores has actually been teaching and preaching for a while now at the church, but she wants to get credentials in the AG. She emphasizes that she reads the Bible in Navajo in personal study and during lessons. She

says, "This makes it clearer to me what the Bible is saying, because it speaks to me in my own language." The truth is, because Delores is Navajo she and others that preach and teach in the church get more "hits" online than Pastor Bob. It makes a difference when you speak the language of the people and when you think the way the people in the congregation think.

The goal of the CNLD is to provide local training in Native country that is affordable, accessible, and understandable. Delores has looked at the book for New Testament Survey and found the first pages daunting. This is why I have developed PowerPoint audio-visual lessons that include lots of pictures. My intention is that the audio-visual lessons can be used to replace reading the books if necessary. Another very important goal of the CNLD is to shift from an outsider, like myself, teaching to someone from the particular culture, like Delores, as soon as possible. We simply understand best those who speak our language and think like we do. I have already told Delores that I hope she does so well that she would start teaching these courses in the future!

Keep Delores and the Navajo people in prayer. She hungers to learn more about Jesus and God's Word, but also wants her people to know and understand God's love for them. She says, "The Bible talks about death, but the Navajo do not. They don't know about the afterlife, "I want to open their eyes and show them 'this is what the Bible says' so they do not need to be scared."

## Some Navajo Etiquette



Navajo Tribal Seal

The Navajo Reservation is the largest Native Rez in the US. The Rez is about the size of W. Virginia, spans across 4 states, and is home to about 300,000 Native

people. Many consider Navajo lands to be among the most scenic in the world. 12 movies have been shot in Monument Valley alone. The scene in Forrest Gump where Forest stopped running was shot in Monument Valley. Because of the beauty of the land and mainstream America's curiosity about Native people many visit the area. If you ever visit in Navajo country there are a number of things you may want to remember.



Forrest Gump in Monument Valley

Navajos value personal space and have a larger space-bubble than non-Natives. Those living in northern New England and northern New York, may actually have similar size space-bubbles. Like most people, Navajos appreciate when others show proper respect. You can show respect by learning about the people before visiting. The

"firm" handshake of mainstream Americans is considered aggressive and offensive, so use a softer handshake when greeting a Navajo. Unlike mainstream Americans, the Navajo people use very little eye contact. Direct eye-contact can also be viewed as aggressive and offensive. Look off to the side or look indirectly when speaking to a Navajo. This is also true for some other tribes too.

Navajos hold strong spiritual beliefs. These include beliefs in mountains spirits represented by the Kachina dolls, trickster spirits such as coyote, bringers of bad omens and death such as owls, and shape-shifters (called skin-walkers). These things are feared and so generally not discussed. Navajo powwows are also spiritual events. The dances all have spiritual significance. The dances of the powwows are meant for the general public, but there are also other dances that are meant only for those within the tribe. It is offensive to ask to be allowed to observe these private dances. Generally, you should not applaud Native dancers. It is also disrespectful to call the outfits of Native dancers "costumes." The outfits are



properly called "regalia." Each part of a dancers regalia has a specific meaning. Additionally, many Navajo Christians do not believe that Christians should attend their powwows because of the spiritual beliefs represented in the dances and the wares sold in some of the booths that are a part of most powwows.

When speaking with any Native person do not claim Native heritage, this is extremely offensive. Among Navajos pointing with your finger is impolite, instead use your lips or a nod to point. Navajo culture is elder based. It is impolite to get food or eat ahead of the elders. If you want to show respect, ask if you can bring food to elders who are too weak to stand in line. Navajo culture is also matriarchal. Among other things, this means that an elder woman will generally be the one who takes newcomers and outsiders under her wing to teach them. It is impolite to ask too many questions or probing questions. Instead, it is necessary to learn by observation and imitation. It is also always honoring to call elder women "mother, grandmother, or auntie" and elder men "father, grandfather, or uncle."

