

Christians Reach Olympic Crowds With Spiritual 'Readings'

A team of believers interpreted dreams to reveal God's love to sports fans

A different kind of "dream team" was assembled for the Winter Olympics, staged in Utah in February. The members were recruited not for their sporting skills but for abilities like those of the Old Testament figure Joseph.

Among the several hundred Christians who traveled to Salt Lake City to share their faith with visitors during the Games was a group offering to explain people's dreams as a way of telling them about God's love.

While other evangelists were passing out tracts and preaching, the "dream team" volunteers were hosting what they described in nonchurchy terms as "spiritual readings" around the city, including at two secular bookstores.

The events were organized by Cindy McGill, who with her husband, Tim, pastor Salt Lake City's Foursquare church and were part of a move of similar outreaches that have been developing across the country. McGill said that the ministry was a way of reaching out to spiritual seekers who may be wary of the traditional church.

"God is pouring out dreams just like He said He would in the book of Joel, and people are getting information, and they don't know what to make of it," McGill said. People she had previously ministered to through interpreting their dreams had

been “floored,” she said. “They begin to weep; they just break down and cry. They have never heard from God. They didn’t know God was talking to them.”

Those taking part in the Olympics outreach were graduates of training courses by prophetic ministry leader John Paul Jackson, who teaches about dream interpretation through his Streams Ministries International. About 2,000 people have completed the programs in the United States and overseas.

Jackson said that the growing interest in alternative religions and spirituality meant that biblically based dream interpretation was “a hook to put in the jaw of any unbeliever, reaching out to them in language they understand and are comfortable with.”

Not all dreams are from God. They also can come from a person’s own soul or the devil, Jackson said. But a third of the Bible was dream-related, Jackson said, with many key figures—including Jacob, Mary, and the Josephs of both the Old and New Testaments—being spoken to by God through their dreams.

Dream interpreters were taught not to be directive, he said. “We are very low-key. We say, ‘This is what we believe the dream means,’ and, ‘We believe this is what God wants to communicate to you.’” Many dreams spoke of God’s love and concern for the individual, he said.

Members of Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Phoenix have been holding regular “free dream interpretation” sessions for more than a year at two local bookstores—which have even paid to advertise the events.

“We do about 20 people in a three-hour session, and we usually have people waiting in line,” said Kathy Beal, prophetic ministry-team leader. “We have had people that are heavily involved in high places in witchcraft and the occult who have openly begun to weep and say, ‘This is what I have been looking for.’ If they give us permission to be open about the Lord, we are.”

The outreach has been warmly received, Beal said.

“We have to gain favor with people before we earn the right to express the truth, because there are so many different opinions about truth out there, especially in bookstores. But once they see that we respect them and care for them, and we are not there to use them to promote something, they might not agree with what we say, but they see we are interested in blessing them.”

Vineyard pastor Dennis Bourns said he did not know of anyone who had been ministered to who had not appreciated it. “They all seem to find it helpful and credible.”

Andy Butcher