



Grace & CLEATS

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DECEMBER 2011

PLEASE PRAY...

- that I would resolve to grow in my knowledge and affection for Jesus Christ and Him crucified every day
- for diligence in completing my MDiv by April 2012.
- for God to use this ministry to reconcile people to Himself through Jesus
- for wisdom/discernment to properly restructure the ministry for 2012
- for God to raise up leaders with a heart to serve in this ministry
- that my life toward, and before, Jenni and the boys would exude grace and model Christ-likeness
- for God's financial provision.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Study Leave & Vacation through the end of 2011
- Wed: Open Gym Volleyball
- Thurs & Sat: Open Gym Basketball

More than a Baby

If you are a fan of *The Office*, you are well aware of Stanley's strong desire for "just plain baby Jesus lyin' in a manger Christmas!" YouTube it...it's funny.

Most of this country looks forward to Christmas for a variety of different reasons - time with friends and family, presents, food, time off from work and/or school, travel, snow, decorations, lights synced to music, great sales, and did I mention food. But, unfortunately, what gets lost in much of the hubbub of the "holiday season" is just plain baby Jesus lyin' in a manger Christmas. That is sad, at times frustrating, and possibly even a bit offensive to those of us that desire to celebrate the holiday as it was intended to be celebrated.

If you fall into that last category, I want to encourage you to move beyond Stanley's view of Christmas to a holistically biblical view of it. Our Associate Pastor preached it well this past Sunday when he said that Christmas isn't Christmas without sin and death. Christmas isn't Christmas without the shedding of blood. You may be thinking, "That is too gory for Christmas". I contend that it is the very GLORY of Christmas.

The holiday that we will all celebrate this weekend is about much more than a cute, little baby boy. It is about the creator, goal, and sustainer of all creation breaking into human existence in the form of a baby boy with the expressed purpose of living a life of perfect obedience (for us) so

that He might die a brutal, gory death (for us) to secure an eternal salvation that is possible by not other means, and all this...you guessed it, for us!

This cute, little baby boy comes to be our suffering Savior and will return again as our conquering King. Is that what you celebrate? Does Christmas not only cause you to look back to the 1st advent of Christ, but also to look forward to the 2nd advent of our Savior and King?

This holiday is not about family or food or shopping or even giving. It is about WORSHIP! May your heart be full of worship this Christmas season and always.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Grab a Book

If there was a list of Top 5 Most Commonly Written About Topics for Christians, I would be pretty confident that two of those top five would be parenting and prayer. Many of us need a lot of help understanding how to be faithful in these areas. And many of us find ourselves being frustrated, even despondent over our failures here.

There are a lot of good books on these topics, but you may feel as though you have read well but

have not seen the growth you had hoped for. I share that feeling, as I have read several books in both categories and often feel frustrated shortly after, if not before, completing them. The books start to run together or just seem like a bunch of techniques that don't bring about long-term transformation.

I am currently in the process of reading a book in each of these categories, and I can't recommend them more highly. The approach

of both is different, and more satisfying, than anything I have read on either topic. It's not because the authors out thought everybody else, but more because they are so organically Gospel-centric. I encourage you to read them and be blessed.

- *Give Them Grace* by Elyse Fitzpatrick (also wrote an outstanding, short devotional called *Comforts from the Cross*)
- *A Praying Life* by Paul E. Miller

“...rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.”

- 1 Timothy 4:7b-8



Off to cut down our Christmas tree!
Cohen (1), David, Coby (7), Caleb (9),
Carson (5), Jenni

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SUPPORT UPDATE:

2011 PROJECTED SHORTFALL
\$0! PRAISE GOD!

Please make tax-deductible
contributions to:

Crossroads Community Church

14885 Southeastern Pkwy
Fishers, IN 46037

Memo: SRM - Staff Support



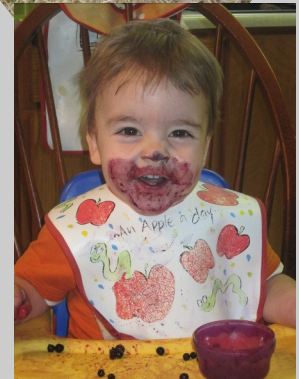
Caleb



Coby



Carson



Cohen

May God
richly bless
you this
Christmas
and in the
coming year
through His
Son, and our
Savior, Jesus!



This past year has been one of growth, blessing, refinement, joy, hardship, and hope. I am sure that your year includes many, if not all of those same categories of experience. That is the reality of living for Christ in a broken and fallen world - a mixture of struggle with joy, hardship that leads to hope.

My prayer for you this Christmas, and in the coming year is that you would know the joy of salvation that comes through faith in Christ alone, that you would experience growth in grace, and that your every hardship would drive you with expectant hope to our God whose power is made perfect in our weakness.

You are a blessing to me and my family. Merry Christmas!

Grace
David



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