

Paul and Kaelin

Prayer Requests:

- Focus on evangelism
- Vision for the coming Church plant
- Hearts of faith and fear of the Lord
- God's provision

January 2010 - Happy New Year!

Happy New Year to you! We just got back from our wonderful trip to Portland. We had a great time with friends and family! Thank you for your prayers for our safe travel, our flights went well! We pray for many blessings on you this year.

We are back in the swing of things with LDI. Paul is now taking Pastoral Functions and designing the church plant plan. Paul is still co-teaching Theology. Kaelin will be leading another Beth Moore study, growing a baby, and making a disciple of our lovable and ever more independent son. We are still praying about how else to focus our time, especially in preparation for planting.



Luke had a blast at Christmas. He especially loved trying on Daddy's new shoes and walking around.

Fear

"Don't open that up, it has a laser in it. YOU'LL DIE!" - Ernie to my brother when he was trying to fix a broken CD Drive. This comment was said in all seriousness, which is why it is an ongoing joke with some of my friends. We'll say "don't do that, you'll die!". Oddly enough, this is also an echo from many things we hear from our fear-driven world. We are continually bombarded with scares about certain contagious diseases, certain tainted foods, certain dangerous individuals. The media thrives off it because making you fear something will ensure you'll keep watching! And we also use this in conversation. When we want to get someone on our side, we often paint the other options in such a way as to create fear of other alternatives. Fear works. Fear is persuasive.

Fear itself is not a bad thing, the Bible talks quite a lot about fear, but it says that *what* we fear is important. The object of our fear is able to rob us of joy, identity, and even faith. When we fear something, we are giving that thing control over us. This is why scripture says clearly: "Only fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart" (1 Samuel 12:24). If we fear other things, ultimately those are idolatries that disregard God's truth. A clear example: fearing death. Jesus conquered sin and death on the cross. Now we can be assured we will live forever with Him. If we continue to fear death, we are

worshipping our earthly bodies and ignoring the truth of eternal life in Christ.

Of course we should avoid dying! That's wisdom. Not fearing does not mean not being wise. Wisdom tells us not to touch the hot oven or we'll get burned nor to run a red light or we could get into an accident. Wisdom allows us to avoid undesirable consequences and seek desirable ones. Seeking to avoid pain can be done wisely and not out of fear. Where does wisdom come from? "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding" (Psalm 111:10). We fear the Lord and allow that to control our life, and in return God's wisdom will guide us.

Recently I have been very convicted by my own fears. My own intelligence and creativity work against me: I can think up many possible dire situations. What if we run out of money? What if our church plant fails? What if, what if, what if? My mind races in a short-sighted way that misses God. What if? Well... Jesus. That's the answer. Jesus will work all things for good (Romans 8:28). Jesus will protect us (Psalm 23:4). Jesus will provide for us (Matthew 6:33). Our God is bigger than anything that can confront us, so I cannot let these other things rob me of my joy in Christ today. That is why Jesus said **"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life..."** (Matt 6:25).