



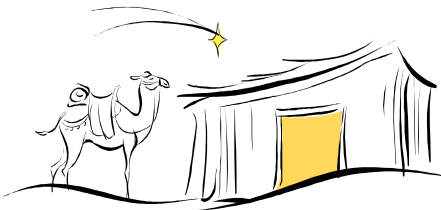
GRACE MESSENGER

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December 2010

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**May Peace be
your gift at
Christmas and
your blessing all
year through!**



The Son of God Humbled Himself . . .

BY HIS BIRTH

The Son of God humbled himself to become clothed with human flesh. The birth of Jesus was a great act of humility, but it is not the only example of his humiliation of the baptism into human life. When the Son of God left the glory world, he did not hold on to his state of exaltation which he experienced in heaven. He willingly gave up the exaltation of heavenly glory and took on the role of a slave.

Jesus, although totally God, did not live his life in the power of the Second Person of the Trinity but lived in creature dependency. All that Jesus of Nazareth did in his entire earthly existence was in submission to the will of the Father and in submission to the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus did not live his earthly life in the state of exaltation but in the state of humiliation.

BY HIS LIFE

The God-man Jesus was humbled by his birth and by his life. His humiliation would carry Him further. In submitting to the will of the Father and to the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus became obedient to the most cruel death ever devised by man—death by the cross. The eternal presence of God that never dies by becoming clothed in human flesh experienced the humiliation of the pains of death in that flesh. The Son of God clothed in human flesh experienced not only the humiliation of death but a death reserved for common criminals.

Continued on page 3

Table of Contents

The Son of God Humbled Himself. . .	1
A Personal Note from James	2
Schedule and Host Homes	2
Jesus!	4
Christian Ministries	5
Contact Information	5

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A Personal Note

from James



It is Christmas, 2010. As a young man away back when, I could not even conceive that there would be for me a Christmas, 2010. But, it has come and once again Jesus still warms our hearts, turns our thoughts to family, and makes us aware of special friends. Jesus is the reason why there is still a song in my heart, a smile on my face, and a praise in my soul.

Who would have thought, when back there in that small town in Oklahoma where a major trip for most would be to travel to the neighboring town fourteen miles away, that the Lord would take me to so many places. It has been a journey to many different towns, many different cities, and many different countries. Jesus is not only the reason but the source of strength why I have traveled over 100,000 miles each of the last several years.

My journey has taken me a long way from that town of 1994 people. It first took me to California as a young man of eighteen years. While there, I met Louise, a very pretty blonde who attended one of the churches I visited. Who I accused of following me back to Oklahoma to marry me (I am sure she would tell a different story). After pastoring a small church in Oklahoma for a year, we went back to California to "work for Jesus." Dana, our oldest child was born in Compton, California, just before we set out to regions unknown as a traveling evangelist. Shawn, our oldest son, was born in Western Oklahoma, at Okarche, about two years later. Keisha, our youngest, was born in Eastern Oklahoma (Muskogee), again, about two years later. Jesus is the reason why we are blessed with the family we have and the reason why they were born in three different cities and two different states.

Perhaps, the greatest miracle of my traveling is we have been introduced to so many people that have become our friends. If you are reading this Newsletter, it is probably because by some miracle of His grace God has brought you into our lives. You have been so gracious to let us come into many of your homes and into your hearts. Once again, Jesus is the reason why so many of you have let so much of his love be experienced among us.

My thoughts and prayer for you in this Christmas of 2010 are that you, too, will experience Jesus in your travels, your family, and your friends.

James & Louise

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[www.wayofchrist.org/
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(continued from page 1)

BY HIS SUFFERING AND DEATH

Suffering as none has ever suffered—born of humble origins, lived His life in abasement, and died by the degrading death of crucifixion, he nevertheless willingly experienced the baptism into human life. He was taken down by the heavenly Father into the created world of physical existence with its weakness, decay, and death.

HIS HUMILIATION BROUGHT HIS EXALTATION

I believe experiencing Jesus brings all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge of the ways of God. Since what he says is always consistent with the nature of his being, his words can be trusted. They reveal all the essence of an infinite God that can be comprehended by a finite mind. His expression is defined as the words of eternal life.

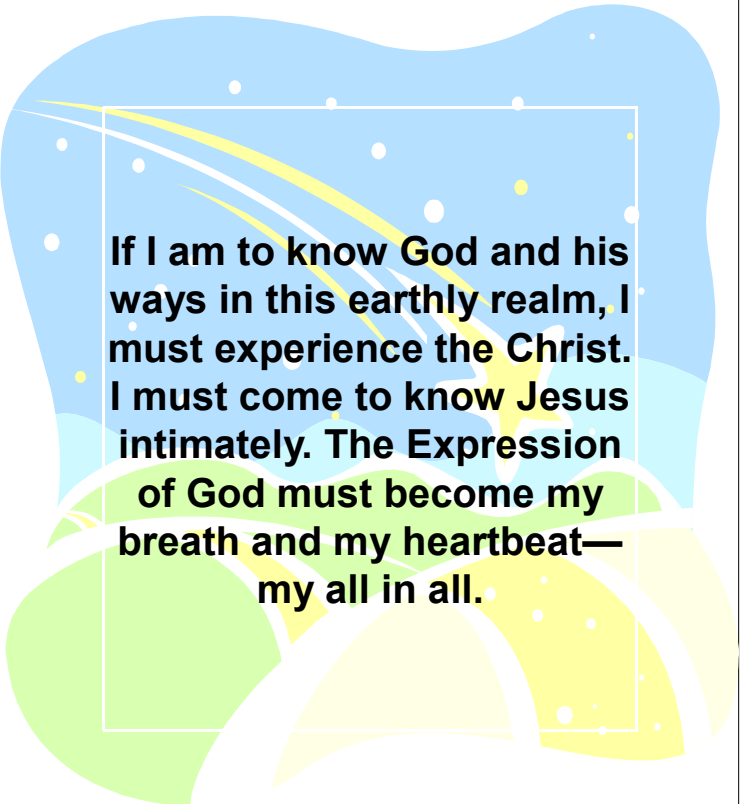
Although he never transcribed a single word of his sayings, his words have been recorded that people of every age may hear. Even though he never printed a single page of his teachings, his proclamations were soon written to be kept for following generations to read. While he lived and died in an inconspicuous place, the life and times of Jesus have been uniquely preserved for all peoples and for all times.

The man Jesus, his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, is the ultimate revelation of God to the physical, earthly realm. He is the Christ—the anointed One, the means by which the created universe experiences God. He is the ultimate expression of God in the world. In the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God into the human flesh of Jesus of Nazareth lies the knowledge of the constitutional nature of man. Jesus is totally God and totally man. He has a divine nature in all aspects of what it means to be God. He has a human nature in all aspects of what it means to be man. Yet, Jesus is not a person of dual

personalities. He is one person. His divine nature and His human nature set together in perfect oneness of soul.

The Son of God left the glory world and became clothed in human flesh. He was willing to become a man (born as a man, live as a man, die as a man, and be resurrected as a man) in order that men might experience the life of God in their own death and resurrection, their own baptism in life.

The humiliation of Christ is not the end of the story. His humiliation brought His exaltation. He was resurrected from the dead to stand up again in power victorious over death and the grave. He was raised up from the physical world to sit down at the right hand of God becoming the quickening power of life for all men. He not only showed man how to live through the ways of life but by his exaltation he became the way by which man can victoriously experience his own baptisms in life.



If I am to know God and his ways in this earthly realm, I must experience the Christ. I must come to know Jesus intimately. The Expression of God must become my breath and my heartbeat—my all in all.

Jesus!

Although more than two thousand years have past since Jesus lived, died, and rose from the grave, he still lives today as the greatest, most powerful influence in the world. The proud statesmen of the past centuries have come and gone. Rulers, scholars, philosophers, and theologians have come and gone. But Jesus still lives today.

He is the most unique person that has ever lived. His birth was unique. He was born of a virgin, supernaturally conceived. His birth was angelically announced both to Mary and to the shepherds in the fields. Although of low birth, he was of the highest origin.

His life was unique. His life was characterized by the supernatural. He lived a holy life without sin and performed greater miracles than anyone who has ever lived.

His message was unique. He offers love and forgiveness and a new way of life for all who receive him as savior and the essence of their lives. Wherever his message has gone, new life, new hope, and a new purpose for living have resulted.

His birth, his life, his message, his death, and his resurrection all indicate that Jesus is exactly who he claimed to be. He was clear in his proclamation to be the Son of God, the essence of life for all mankind--the savior of the world.

Throughout history, the influence Jesus had on the lives of people has never been surpassed. No other great leader has inspired so many positive changes in the lives of his followers. People who encounter the risen Christ are totally transformed. Staying true to their faith, they do not hesitate to face hardship, persecution and even death.

Following Jesus' crucifixion, his disciples were devastated. They had forsaken him in the Garden of Gethsemane to save their own lives. But after they met the resurrected Christ, they were radically changed. Suddenly, they were willing to give their lives to tell Jesus' story to the world. Many were tortured and killed because they proclaimed Jesus was alive.

Skeptics and enemies were also transformed. Jesus' younger brother, James, didn't think Jesus was anybody special. But after his resurrected brother appeared to him, James not only believed Jesus was Lord but became the leader of the Jerusalem church and died a martyr in 62 AD.

Saul of Tarsus was the chief persecutor of early Christians. He dragged people to prison. When they did not

recant their faith, he was a party to their execution. But he had a dramatic encounter with the risen Christ on his way to Damascus and he was transformed from Saul, the enemy of Christianity, to Paul, the main propagator of its message. He left his position of prestige in Jewish society, to become a traveling missionary who experienced incredible suffering in order to share the love of Christ throughout the Roman empire.

Historian Philip Schaff described the overwhelming influence which Jesus had on subsequent history and culture of the world. *"This Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon; without science...he shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of schools, he spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet; without writing a single line, he set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned volumes, works of art, and songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times."*

The power of Christ knows no boundary of time or space. In our own age, many skeptics have been convinced just as thoroughly as their first-century counterparts. For example, Lew Wallace, a famous general and literary genius, was a known atheist. For two years, Wallace studied in the leading libraries of Europe and America, seeking information that would forever destroy Christianity. While writing the second chapter of a book outlining his arguments, he suddenly found himself on his knees crying out to Jesus, "My Lord and my God."

When confronted by solid indisputable evidence, he could no longer deny that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Later, Lew Wallace wrote the book *Ben Hur*, one of the greatest English novels ever written concerning the time of Christ.

Similarly, the late C.S. Lewis, professor at Oxford University in England, was an agnostic who denied the deity of Christ for years. But he, too, in intellectual honesty, submitted to Jesus as his God and Savior after studying the overwhelming evidence for his deity. Over the years, he wrote many books to uphold the ideals of Christianity, including *Mere Christianity* and *The Screwtape Letters*.

Both of these men and many other men and women have found fulfillment and joy in following the teachings of Jesus. They were transformed when they met Christ and yielded their lives to him. Each of them has made a positive impact on the world. They realize that agnosticism, atheism, and secular humanism hold no true answers. Jesus is still relevant to the needs of today. The life of Christ still changes lives!



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The good news of God is the coming of Jesus into this world. It is His life, His teaching, his death, His resurrection, His ascension, and His coming into the life of the believer.

Ultimately, the good news is that man can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, a personal relationship with God Himself.

Christian Ministries exists solely to help all people experience the fullness of the manifestation of Christ in their life.

Weekly CD:

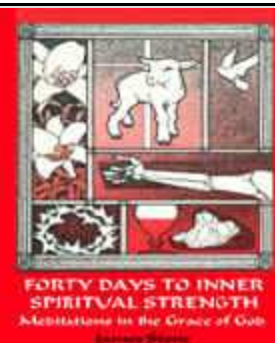
Barry and Jennifer with their children, Kaitlyn Grace & Gabriel James



Christian Ministries offers a free **Weekly CD** of Bible study for those who desire to participate.

Contact Barry Shepherd
barrysheperd@wayofchrist.org

We encourage you to share these CD's with others in your community to increase discussion of what the Lord is revealing in your lives.

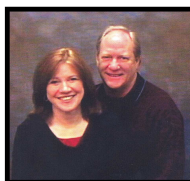


FORTY DAYS TO INNER SPIRITUAL STRENGTH: Meditations in the Grace of God

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Meet the Editors: Dale and Joy Simpson

Our prayer for you is that the life of the Spirit would enable you to hear the mystery of the Word in this newsletter. We believe the Lord is revealing how the gospel of Jesus Christ is setting us free from ourselves.



All International Pastors or Missionaries please reply to this email address:
nyagali@gmail.com

God bless you today! Dale and Joy Simpson

Host (or Support) a Live Home Bible Study from ANYWHERE in the World!

www.wayofchrist.org/bible-study-conference.asp

Invite a few friends over for a Bible Study. Dr. Stone will join you live through the Internet. All you need is a computer, a bible, and a few friends, family or neighbors. It would be helpful if you had a webcam and microphone on your computer in order to interact live with James and the brothers and sisters, but not essential.



Please seek the Lord if you would like to help sponsor a group or an individual to have access to this opportunity. For More Information Contact:

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