

12.24.11

Walking Dusty...

teacher: Dan Crist

This year for Christmas my husband and I took our kids to Disney World and Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida. We thought it might be our last family vacation since my oldest will graduate from college and join the Army in May, 2012, so we wanted to make it really special. About a week before the trip, I regretted scheduling the vacation over Christmas Day. I thought it would be hard to see Jesus and the real meaning of Christmas in a theme park setting. I was afraid my kids would be distracted by the commercialization of the holiday.

While I don't know for sure what was going on in my kids' hearts, I know what God was doing in mine. I had brought a book entitled *Give Them Grace*. It reminded me how much grace God has shown me throughout my life and encouraged me to share that with my kids. I was really humbled as I reflected on my sin (past and present) and how it separates me from God. But I was in awe as I thought about how many times God blessed me when I didn't deserve it. In "churchy" vocabulary, that's called grace.

As we stood in line and saw thousands of people, one particular family caught my eye. They were pushing their teenage son in a wheelchair. His arms and legs were shriveled, his face was hollow, and he was drooling. This young man probably didn't know where he was, and yet his parents were pointing out lights and characters and smiling as they spent time with him.

When I think of me in light of our Creator, I feel like this young man. I'm a mess, and I can't take care of myself. I need God to push me around, so to speak, and to point out the good in my life. He wants to dazzle me with His glory, and He wants me to depend on Him. To me, this family was a picture of the Christmas story: God sends His Son to save us, to reconcile us, and to have a relationship with us. It's a beautiful picture of grace!

Questions to Consider:

The Greatest Commandment is "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37, 39) As I contemplate God's grace in my life, do I love Him more? Have I told others?

This month's memory verse: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Peter 1:3

Additional verses: Luke 1:1-4 & Luke 2