

December 2000

I usually start writing our Christmas letter each year by reading last year's letter. It's usually a shock to read last year's later and realize how much has happened since the events I wrote about last year. I must be getting old...

However, before we dive into "the year in review", we must, as we have made our tradition, start with a bit of God's word, since the whole point of this season is a celebration of God becoming a man in Jesus. Here's a little bit from the second to the last book in the Bible (last year's bit was from the last book, so I guess we're working our way forward)

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen. Jude 1:24-25

How great it is to know that Jesus paid the price so I can be presented "before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy."

OK...on to the year in review:

- In April, Roseanne and Jessica went to Russia with a group from our church. We could fill a whole letter with stories on that adventure. They went to help a small church in a town south of Moscow called Voronesh. Our church has "adopted" the church there, and we are excited about the possibility of going back this summer to help again. This time, I hope to go too.
- In May, I sold my business in a merger with an Irish company called Datalex. They were a competitor, and we joined forces in hopes of being a pretty significant force in our market (travel technology). The process of integrating the two companies—especially since the parent company is based in Dublin—has been even more difficult than we expected. I'm the Chief Technology Officer, and I've been traveling extensively—too much. We have hope that this will slow down before too long.
- There was a little reward for all the travel I've been doing in May. I was invited to speak at a conference in Orlando, Florida, and I had some coupons for free flights that I received from being bumped off a flight earlier in the year. So, we used the coupons to fly Roseanne and the kids down to Orlando and we all spent a few days at Disney World. It was only a few days, so we tried to take in as much as we could. We'd like to go back sometime, as there are a number of things we didn't get a chance to see and do.
- Jessica got her learner's permit shortly after her 15th birthday in June, and she's been taking driver's education classes and practicing since then. Roseanne has dug permanent fingernail marks into the armrest on the passenger side of our van from her "grip of terror". Jessica is quickly getting better and the good news is the car and its passengers are none the worse for her driving (yet).
- In August, Jessica went on her second short-term mission trip for this year. She went with a bunch of kids from our high school group to Mexico to help work at a small church there. She had a lot of fun and grew as the result of the experience.
- My boat addiction reared its ugly head again as a gentleman that had been bugging me about buying my previous boat finally talked me into selling it, and I replaced it with a larger sailboat purchased in July. We didn't get a lot of sailing in this year, as we didn't get it down from Seattle until the end of August. I'm hoping to sail to Hawaii again in two years in the Pacific Cup Race—the race I sailed in 1996.

- In October, our company went public on the Nasdaq and Irish stock exchanges. Now we not only have the difficulty of integrating the two companies, but of managing a public company and all the extra scrutiny that brings—especially in a market that hasn't been too kind to technology companies lately.
- Roseanne and I have been leading the college ministry at Harvest for the past few years. This year, we had quite a crowd during the summer for a summer retreat—we had 35 students crammed into three camp sites. Another couple joined us this fall, so we hope to be able to do more with the group with the extra help.
- Katie is in the 8th grade now—one more year of middle school before she follows Jessica into High School. Katie is also interested in short-term missions, and will be going with a group from our church to an Indian reservation in Canada this summer, where groups from our church have ministered for several years.

Whew...I'm tired just writing it. It's been a whirlwind of a year, but as has been so consistently true, the Lord's hand of blessing is on our family, and we're thankful for it. If you'd like to hear the whole story on any of this year's events, or if you'd like to come sailing on new boat, we'd sure like to see you. Drop by or at least drop us some email!

In the Love of our Lord Jesus,