

An Almost-Disastrous Easter Dinner for Thirty

For Resurrection Day, my sons and I (Nate) invited our international friends from K-State to church and lunch afterwards. When I returned home from church, though, I discovered that the septic tank had gotten plugged up so we couldn't allow anybody to use the restroom! So, while my wife and some of the ladies from our church continued to prepare food, some of my children stayed in the living room to talk with guests, and I scurried around with one of my sons to unplug the septic tank. After a while, the drains were functioning again and dinner was ready!

Over dinner, the different guests shared about what traditions they - or other Christians in their country - had for celebrating Easter. We had internationals from Ecuador, Brazil, Uganda, and Myanmar, and they all had some similar traditions. One guest with a Buddhist background remarked that this must mean that all religions are basically the same. I hoped he would discover a difference when he heard the story of Christ's resurrection later on.

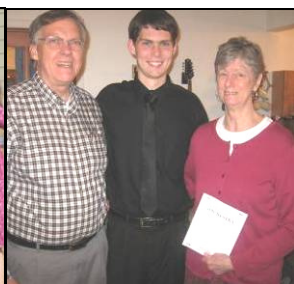
After a lovely dinner, it was time for the egg hunt, but we do it with a twist at our house. Nine of the plastic eggs hidden in the yard are filled, not with candy, but with symbols of the death and resurrection of Christ, together with Bible verses about the Gospel story. I also wanted to hide some candy for the kids but discovered that we didn't have any candy in our pantry! That's

when my Buddhist friend came to the rescue, "I have brought chocolates; I hope you like them," he said. Wow, the kids (and, I dare say, some adults too) had fun finding the chocolates along with the plastic eggs! Once they were all found, we circled up next to the irises in the garden and cracked open the plastic eggs. The first one spoke of the Passover supper and contained some bread and a little cup, the next one had thirty cents in silver dimes representing Judas' betrayal of Jesus, and so forth through the whipping, the cross, the stone rolled over the grave, the empty tomb, and Jesus' ascension into heaven. I was struck by how quietly all our guests listened as the different children read the verses for their part of the narrative.

I am saddened that so many international students never get to see the inside of an American home, and I pray that the students who visit us are blessed by catching a glimpse of an American home life that is dedicated to the Lord Jesus. We pray that the work of the Holy Spirit is displayed in our interpersonal relationships, that the glory of our Heavenly Father is displayed through the arts and skills expressed in our home, and that the redemption of our Lord Jesus is displayed through the traditions and culture and conversations in our home.



Our little girls at play



Grandpa & Grandma Wilson
w/ Beni after his concert



Our jr. & sr. high school kids
dressed for a fun afternoon out



Amos receives his high school
diploma from Paula & Nate

That's What Arrows Are For!

A few weeks ago, I was talking with my fourth son, Peter, about what he wants to do when he finishes high school next year. One of the ideas I brought up as we brainstormed was for him to learn how to run a tree care business from a guy in Kentucky that I helped disciple nine years ago. Peter surprised me by saying he'd like to try that. Then God surprised us by allowing all the pieces to fall into place at a dizzying speed. So yesterday, I found myself waving good-bye for the summer to my dear "little" boy. Of course he'll be back at the end of the summer, but then again, our oldest son Josh moves out at the end of the summer to start law school. Son number two (Beni) is not far behind, as he has charted a solid course toward independence when he graduates from college next year. Then there's Amos, son number three who gradu-

ated from high school last month and is spending his summer working at a farm in central Kansas. At least he'll be coming home on weekends for the time being. I knew this day would come, and we've been trying to prepare for launching children out of the nest, but when it comes right down to it, I'm not finding it easy to say goodbye.

In Psalm 127, Solomon wrote, "Like arrows in the hand of a warrior so are the children of one's youth." These arrows have been in my hand now for about two decades. I've spent many hours cleaning, balancing, hardening, and sharpening them, but arrows are not something you collect. They're built to be shot from a bow – to penetrate a target. Some of the dreams that Paula and I have had to let go of are coming back to life. Paula wanted to be President; Josh is shooting for the Supreme Court. I have long dreamed of developing a Christian retreat center overseas; Amos is taking the first steps that could make that a reality. And the other ten kids also have wonderful aspirations yet to be realized. It seems not so very long ago that I cut that umbilical cord to sever them from their mother at birth... now in order for them to fly as arrows, I've got to let go. Watch out!



Nate & kids lead music at the National Day of Prayer



Josh proudly displays his K-State diploma

Kid's Corner: Grace Anne Wilson

Hey everyone! The past few years have flown by so quickly. I'm already coming up on my sixteenth! Since my last kid's corner, some highlights of the past years have been: finishing my first read through the whole Bible, finishing both Greek and Hebrew classes, becoming a leader in our local Dance Camp, and participating in the NCFCA speech and debate league – and enjoying every minute of it! This year I competed with an Informative speech on childbirth, a Humorous Interpretation of *Cheaper by the Dozen*, and a Duo with Peter of *The Worst Case Scenario Survival Handbook*. I qualified to Regionals in all of my speeches and took third place in the Midwest with my Humorous, qualifying me to Nationals! Unfortunately, the national tournament this year is too far away to attend.



Grace Anne, our 5th child and our oldest daughter

Other things I've enjoyed were the Scottish Country Dance that we did to celebrate Josh and Amos's college and high school graduation, seeing friends from around the States when they visit us, canoeing for fourteen miles on our annual canoe trip, doing deeper studies in the

books of Ruth, Esther, and Genesis, playing and performing with our family band, and composing music. For my fifteenth birthday I bought myself a ukulele, and composed music for Psalm 89 featuring my ukulele. (Y'all can listen to it on our www.NateWilsonFamily.net website!)

This summer, fall, and next year, I'm looking forward to teaching at our summer Dance Camp, playing in the local high school Gold Orchestra, teaching piano lessons, celebrating my sixteenth birthday, acting in Amos & Peter's feature film with some awesome friends in Alabama, and *possibly* a mission trip to Uruguay...

The things I would most appreciate your prayers for would be being diligent in my schoolwork, smiling at the future (Proverbs 31:25), and being a Godly example to the young ladies in our community.

Proverbs 31:30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.



Thanks for Praying!

- Thanks for praying for good health. We are thankful not to have any big problems on this front!
- Our first Parenting Bible Study was a huge answer to prayer, making a real impact on the younger parents who attended. We're definitely going to do it again this fall, but for now, we're teaching a Bradley™ Child-birth class, so we would appreciate your prayers for good rapport with this new group of expectant couples!
- Thanks for praying for my sermon preparations, too. My new strategy of composing straight to PowerPoint bullets hasn't worked so well, resulting in some lengthy, rambling sermons, so it's back to transcripts!
- Thanks for praying for our oldest child, Josh, as he prepares for law school. He would appreciate prayer that he could get the fellowship he applied for at the University of Chicago, and that God would provide in other ways so that he doesn't have to go deep into debt.
- Please pray for Beni, our second-born. He has decided to run for Riley County Commissioner against the incumbent, a well-known radio personality. We believe this would be a great position for Beni to continue his involvement in politics and also to begin earning a living when he graduates from college next year. He will need great wisdom as well as a lot of campaign help! See his website at www.BenWilsonKS.com.
- Thanks also for praying for vocational direction for our third and fourth children, Amos and Peter! God has provided some exciting summer internships for them. Amos is working with an organic farmer in Americus, KS, and Peter is working with a tree care company in Louisville, KY! Please pray for safety, great learning experiences, and clear vocational direction for the future!
- The quarterly men's prayer breakfast in March had a disappointingly-small turnout, but we have another planned for July 19. And I'm sure Trevor (our apologetics ministry guy) and the Porter family (who just adopted two children internationally) wouldn't mind you continuing to pray for them, as they have embarked on big and challenging endeavors!

