

MERRY CHRISTMAS! HAPPY NEW YEAR! AND A GLORIOUS END OF THE SEMESTER!

Well, I finished my first semester of college. It was hard. It was fun. And now it's over... and the verdict is in...

Finals were pretty difficult. I stayed up all night with a friend studying for Christian Scriptures (stopping at Subway at three in the morning) and then stayed up all night again with another friend studying for Greek (keeping myself awake with Hot Fries, Vitamin Water, and a Monster, as well as vigorous Q&A and notecard sessions). On Tuesday afternoon, after my last final, I felt a shock of glee and I was struck dumb with amazement at the thought "I'm DONE!" A couple of weeks ago, I checked my grades, and the shock returned... in the end, after a hard semester... I got 5 A's and a B in Greek!!!!!! I am still amazed at those grades, and I hope you can share my joy with me.

"JOY TO THE WORLD, THE SEMESTER'S DONE!...."

[the ru from ew at bu] 1.3

(the random update from evan weppler at Baylor university)

SUPER NEWS FOR MY SOPHOMORE YEAR!

So, I have been accepted as a **MENTOR** and a **FELLOW** in the Academy for Leader Development and Civic Engagement! For both positions, I filled out applications, wrote essays, and went through interviews- and after all of that, I was accepted!

- **MENTOR**- In the Lead LLC (Living and Learning Center) we have many programs that assist in leadership development- classes, service projects, leadership lectures. One of the most important aspects of the Lead LLC, though, in my opinion, are the Mentor Groups. A Sophomore student meets with a group of 5-10 new students once a week to go through exercises, initiate discussions, and create community. I have gotten to know all of the people in my mentor group very well. And next year, I get to assist the incoming freshman in getting acclimated in the Lead LLC. I can't wait!

- **FELLOW**- Another program in the Academy is the Fellows Program. Academy Fellows take certain classes, work together, and initiate programs in the community to meet a need. This will be something very new for me. Often I just come into a service program and help out where I can. Or when I have tried to initiate something, I've had trouble following through. I know that God will help develop my leadership skills through this program, and I hope to help out the community of Waco in some form or fashion!

ALSO... seeing as I am a part of the LEAD LLC for next year, I will be living in the Allen dorm again, this time on the second floor. And I know my roommate and suitemates for next year: my friend Marcus is my roommate and my friends Mac and Clayton will be our suitemates! Sophomore year is looking pretty good so far... ☺

God Loves Me. What does that even mean?

Our world is a world of "I love you if..." and "You'll please me if you just..." and so on and so forth.

But with Our Father, You Are Loved, and there's nothing you can do about it! No bad deed will make Him love you less. At the same time, no good deed will make Him love you more. You can't please God. The only way for God to be pleased is through faith in Jesus Christ, the holy, wholly perfect one. I can't do anything to gain His love, but I do what I do to love Him and love His people (which is a part of loving Him) {as well as love myself, and love His world, and love His word, and love- just love} Christ is The Embodiment of God. But He is also The Embodiment of Peace, The Embodiment of Love, The Embodiment of Justice. Jesus came to our earth, and as a babe he was wrapped in swaddling clothes- but as a human he was also wrapped in flesh, wrapped in the human experience, and he took on as his own wrapping our sin and its punishment. All for love.

In my favorite show on TV, LOST, there's a character named Desmond. He is stuck on the island, like all the other characters, and at a crucial point, just as he is about to do something heroic that will save the others but most likely end his life, he thinks back to a letter he received from his love, Penelope. She said to Desmond something that is true of us all.

"All we really need to survive is one person who truly loves us."

We have that Person. And what does that even mean?

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

My friend Hannah and I went to the concert "Behold the Lamb of God" - it's a funny story how we got to going, actually. We were talking and I asked her if she'd want to go to an upcoming concert with my top two favorite artists (Andrew Peterson and Sara Groves). She agreed and then asked me if I'd be interested in going to a Bebo Norman concert, one of her favorite artists. I said yes, and then when we looked up the concert information... it was the same concert. Anyway, we drove up to the Dallas area (almost getting lost a few times) and after getting there, realized I had no camera batteries. However, the couple in the seats to my left (who turned out to be from Baylor!) lent me some batteries. And the concert commenced. At first, the five artists (in the top left picture, L-R Andy Gullahorn, Andrew Peterson, Sara Groves, Jill Phillips, Bebo Norman, and Andrew Osenga) played their own individual songs while the others sat to the side and listened and watched (a format they called "in the round"). The second part of the concert told the story of the birth of Christ in songs written by Andrew Peterson and performed by the five as well as an additional ten musicians. The story takes the audience through the Old Testament with songs like "So Long Moses," "Passover Us," and "Deliver Us" to the looming birth of Christ with songs like "Matthews Begats" (which takes all of Joseph's lineage found in Matthew and puts it to music), "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night," and "Behold the Lamb of God." It was even more special when I saw my friends Lisa and Lauren at the concert. It was a great night, and I got autographs with many of the artists and a picture with my musical mentor, Andrew Peterson.



Christmas on Fifth Street

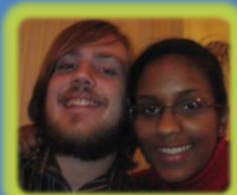
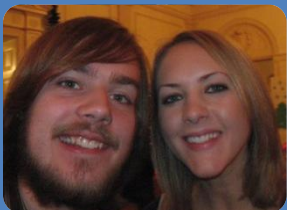
This was a special event at Baylor that featured musicians, sleigh rides, and a real live Nativity scene. While some people waited in lines that went on forever (like my friends at the right) I spent most of my time at the main stage where Chris Rice was playing. I have no pictures, but I do have a few videos from the concert. It was a lot of fun!



LEAD LLC Christmas Party! - This event was a great ending to a great semester! We feasted on snacks, sang karaoke, had White Elephant, and enjoyed a good deal of merriment!



(Here I am with the White Elephant gift I received- a little Cookie Monster toy. But we were also having a toy drive, and I wasn't able to purchase a good toy to donate, so I donated my little Cookie Monster...)



Top Row- Becky (my Leadership class project partner) and I; Jennifer, Co'dy, Raisha, Paula, and Scott; Middle Row- Scott, Jeff, and Liz singing their hearts out in karaoke; Me and Michelle; Saralyn and Mac; Marcus (my future roommate), me, and Brannon, both of them part of the LEAD LLC next year; Bottom Row- Me and Kristen, my Religion class seat-neighbor; a close up of Jeff during a solo; Me and Victoria

TIME TO CUT THE HAIR/HAIRS!

Well, as many of you know, I have a beard. And long hair. And if you didn't, shame on you. Shame, shame, shame...! These new facial additions have brought many new nicknames (see previous ru). It has been fun while it lasted. But now, it's time for the beard and the hair to go. Well, most of it, that is. I'm going to shave and get a haircut. In fact, some of this might happen within the week! Before any of it goes, though, prompted by suggestions from various friends and strangers, I will don some Biblical attire and go out with friends to enjoy the day. Then I will get a haircut that is a little easier on the peripheral vision. Then, bit by bit, the beard will go. As it goes, I will try out different styles: mutton chops, goatee, soul patch, and finally... I will be able to see my face again. I will probably regrow some form of facial hair- I like it... it's just time, you know? So, Beard... it's been fun. Rest in Peace... for a few weeks that is...

*Progression
of the
Beard...* *July 2007-
December
2007*



Before



After...?

QUOTES AND THOUGHTS...

- "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet"- **Frederick Buechner**
- "Friend I know your heart is raw/ But love is still a worthy cause"- **Sara Groves- "Love is still a worthy cause"**
- "Leave it alone, don't analyze/Cause love can be your lullaby/But love can be your hurricane too/And love can take your breath away/ But love can leave you lonely and blue /Oh, what's a heart to do?"- **Chris Rice- "What a Heart is Beating For"**
- Don't view your opinions as absolute truth, but don't consider absolute truths to be mere opinions- **Me**
- "When people told themselves their past with stories, explained their present with stories, foretold the future with stories, the best place by the fire was kept for... The Storyteller"- **intro to Jim Henson's "The Storyteller" TV series**
- "Gather round ye children come/Listen to the old old story/Of the power of death undone/By an infant born of glory/Son of God, Son of Man"- **Andrew Peterson- "Gather 'Round, Ye Children Come"**

NEW CELLPHONE!

Well, another big development from just a few weeks ago is my new cell phone. I had an old phone that lasted me about 3 years (except for the 3 weeks or so early this February when I tried the Red Razor). My old phone was reliable and trustworthy, but it was time. My new phone has special dialing fonts, will receive and send text messages (FINALLY!), and is nice and slim like the Razor, but works really well. I might send out pictures of my old phone and my new phone in the next ru, but we'll see...

OLD PHONE

January 2005-November 2007

RIP

Thanksgiving Break

I just realized that I didn't write about my Thanksgiving Break, even though it was great! We celebrated Thanksgiving at my house and had relatives come over and feast on good food. I spent time with some friends, going to dinner and various other things. I played another round of the Dollar Store Game (*for those of you who don't know how this game goes, it has 3 main rules- 1. Everyone walks through all the aisles of the dollar store 2. Every person purchases 3 items [more may be purchased, such as food or other fun stuff, but only 3 items can be used in the competition] 3. The person with the coolest stuff wins. It's pretty fun. My friend Trent and I invented the game and have played it 3 or 4 times*) with my friends Trent and Christian. Then I saw "Bee Movie" (for the second time) with Timothy Starbuck, had some lunch, and made paper airplanes. And I also got to see "August Rush" with Josh Mokry, and then we played some pool back at the Mokrys. Like always, great fun and fellowship back home in Cypress...



Me and my dollar store purchases

Christmas Break has been great so far. I've visited CCS far too many times, but have enjoyed every minute of it, visiting classes, talking with past teachers, and hanging out with old friends at lunch. I also had an "END OF FINALS... FINALLY" party at my house, and we played Apples to Apples and watched "Finding Nemo." There are only a couple of weeks left in the break, and I'm hoping to visit with more people while I'm home.

Christmas was a great time for celebrating Christ's birth, family, and gifts. I received, among many GREAT presents, Season 3 of LOST, the "August Rush" soundtrack, some Argyle socks, some books and CDs, a "Pirates of the Caribbean" UNO Card set, "Mr. Bean's Holiday", and some money and various great gifts.

Next semester is going to be great. I can't wait to be back and see friends and start anew. However, I'm really just happy where I am right now. Merry belated Christmas to all, and a Happy New Years too! Celebrate the New Year God is giving you, each and every day in each and every way.

Evan Christopher W.



a little beauty



Cyanide and Happiness © Explosm.net

and a little hilarity

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