

December 7, 2009

# Monday Coffee Cup...

*A bit of encouragement to bring a  
jolt of life to your day!*



*OK. So I suppose I am now ready to think about Christmas... Our tree is up, the house is decorated as much as it is going to be this year, my van radio is tuned to Christmas music, and there was even snow to greet us when we woke up this morning! The Christmas season can be such a busy time with Christmas parties, children's programs, special church services, that I know I often have to consciously stop—at least mentally, for a moment—and remind myself of the Reason for the season. And while it may seem a cliché statement, it is absolutely the one and only foundation for any of our celebrations: "Jesus IS the Reason for the season!"*

*We've already had a busy couple of weeks here at Graceland, as our Worship Ministry prepared for—and carried out—our outreach event at the local mall. How fun to watch people light up when they see all the people in similar festive attire—or as they hear the children "sweetly singing o'er the plains"! I heard one woman comment to someone beside her, "THIS is what I miss about Christmas." Have we become so materialistic and commercially driven that we put the blinders on, go about our shopping frenzy, and miss the idea of joy and good will at Christmas time? And that's just the beginning... It goes much deeper than just being happy or sharing some good cheer. As I stated earlier, JESUS is Who we celebrate, and His life, death and resurrection is What allows us to live with hope and joy today—and everyday—no matter what the economy does, or what health care bill is passed, or who presides in the White House. Our very life comes from Emmanuel, who is "GOD WITH US."*

*I find myself wanting life to be just a little bit slower this Christmas—not quite so many programs, not so much of a "what's in it for me?" mentality, just a slower pace and a more Christ-centered holiday. So what might that look like? Maybe it will mean more focused giving, and less wanting to receive. Sean and I have already made that commitment to each other... Maybe it will mean spending more time with loved ones, and not so much time running hither and yon...*

*And maybe it will mean slowing down enough to continue to seek the One who came as a Baby—the One sought out by kings, yet destined for death—the One who gave the ultimate gift to me... the gift of His life—in order that I might experience life eternal, and life abundant!*

*I pray that Jesus, the Christ-child, will be evident TO you and IN you in the coming weeks and beyond... and that you will experience a holiday season unlike any other before, drawing closer to our Savior, Emmanuel—God with us. He IS with us... so let's be sure to include Him in ALL we do!*

*Remembering Him...*

*-Carlee*

*"For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given...*

*...And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)*

