

Christmas 2003

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe Proverbs 18:10

This last summer Kris, Noah and I had the opportunity to go camping with my family to Lake Shasta. It was a good time of swimming, eating dirt, living in a tent...camping stuff. Kris wasn't sleeping well from the combination of Noah sharing our air mattress and it being hot (110+ F). As a result she happened to be awake when the local wildlife entered the camp.

"Pat, I hear a noise."

"It's the dog in the campsite next to us," I managed to mumble. Hoping to end it there and go back to sleep.

"No, it's bigger."

"It's a *big* dog."

"Get up and look."

"Ugh."

At this point I need to raise a question. Let's say it is 1200 lbs. of California bruin with fire in its eyes and a taste for human flesh on its lips. What did she expect me to do, armed only with a pair of gym shorts which I happened to be wearing? I did what any coward would do. "Get the baby NOW and get into the van!" (My car key had to be replaced after I nearly twisted it in two during the adrenaline rush.) You see to *1200 lbs. of California bruin with fire in its eyes and a taste for human flesh on its lips*, a four-man Coleman tent is nothing more than the wrapper on a tasty snack cake. (mmmmmm...Twinkie). The next morning, while we were eating a ham-less breakfast, my Dad found what he said was a raccoon track and that proved it was no bear. I believe all it proves was the bear had little feet and a taste for Virginia ham. After all – even though it was totally dark, with no moonlight under the trees – I, with no flashlight, had *seen* it. We didn't stay another night.

Whether or not it was really a bear is up to debate. However, I have camped in areas where I had to put my food in a tree and the only security from the wildlife was 8-mil nylon. There are those who might question the sanity of that. The truth is, people are equally insane with their security all the time. We live in evil days. Where is your security? Do you trust your finances to the stock market? Do you trust your security to the deadbolt on your front door, the local police or the military? Do you put your trust in your employer? In your spouse? In your friends? In your family? In yourself? The problem is all those things, although good, involve people and people are fragile and fallible. When you put your security in something fragile and fallible you might as well be facing down a bear in a Twinkie suit. You're going to get bit.

The beautiful thing about Christmas is not the decorations, presents, parties, food or getting together with family. The beautiful thing about Christmas is we don't have to put our security in the fallible or the fragile. We can have true security; *The name of the Lord is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe Proverbs 18:10 NKJV*. When Christ came to earth as a fragile baby only later to be crucified for our sins then raised on the third day He provided us with the security we cannot find anyplace else. Because, although fragile as a human, as God, He is not fallible.

Our Christmas hope for you is this: *Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Psalms 34:8 NKJV* – that you would know the security God offers so deeply that you can taste it.

God has continued to richly bless us this year. Feel free to visit our web site (www.keeners.net) for regular updates and current pictures.

Merry Christmas From The Keeners