

"This will go down as one of the earliest and most promotional Black Fridays in history. Many stores opened earlier than ever before and retailers offered unbelievable sales and discounts to get people shopping." Tracy Mullin President of the National Retail Federation

"All I want is what I... I have coming to me. All I want is my fair share." Sally Brown

I don't understand Black Friday shopping. I have been once... and didn't find what I was looking for. What I really don't understand is how, within a few short hours we, as a society, go from celebrating thankfulness to being consumed by dissatisfaction and greed.

In 2008 Jdimytai Damour (age 43), a temporary maintenance worker at the Long Island, NY Wal-Mart was trampled to death by crowds hoping to bag a holiday bargain. A police officer on the scene was quoted, "Even officers who arrived to perform CPR on the trampled worker were stepped on by wild-eyed shoppers streaming inside".

And in despair I bowed my head  
"There is no peace on earth," I said,  
"For hate is strong and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men."

"His body was a stepping bag with so much disregard for human life," Ernst Damour, 37, said. "There has to be some accountability."

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail  
With peace on earth, good will to men." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Maybe it is appropriate (if not historically accurate) we celebrate the birth of Christ at the winter solstice; the coldest, darkest time of the year. It is to a cold dark world, full of hate, selfishness, hurt... that He comes... to be held "accountable" not for anything he has done but for *everything* we have done.

He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:3-6 (NKJV)



God has continued to bless our family in 2010. I have a new job working for Intel. I started mid July and it is working out great. My career in the past 5 months has progressed further than it did in 2 years at my last job. Both Noah and Kaara continue to grow in their faith and are doing well in school and extracurricular activities such as art club and chess club. We are excited to see God working in each of their lives. Kris has kept her job despite the continued down real estate market. We sold our house in Washougal and allowed that chapter in our lives to close. We continue to seek out what God is doing and how He might use us for His glory.

May you, this Christmas, live in the truth of Jesus Christ, that you are able to celebrate the reality of His birth not just December 25<sup>th</sup> but every day this coming year.

Merry Christmas,

*For unto Us,  
a Child is born...*

*Prayer Kaara NOAH! Kris*

