

"A world of nice people, content in their own niceness, looking no further, turned away from God, would be just as desperately in need of salvation as a miserable world---and might be even more difficult to save."
~C.S. Lewis

The dance usually begins something like this..

"Can I have a snack?"

"Yes."

"What can I have?"

"What do you want?"

"Stick (string/mozzarella) cheese."

"O.K... do you need help?"

"I can do it"

Under my breath, "Yeah right, you couldn't do it yesterday or even this morning for that matter...mutter, mutter"

After 5 minutes of obstinate struggle, "Just let me help you."

"I CAN DO IT!"

"Here, just let me help," opening the cheese.

"HMMPPH!" Stomp, stomp, stomp.

Once again I am left holding the cheese. My parents tell me that they knew a little boy that was much the same way about peeling his banana but I am sure they are making it up because I have no brothers.

Both Kaara and Noah insist that they can do things that I know that they can't and it makes me nuts! As I honestly consider my life I would have to say that it's not just them but me also. I think it is human nature—our pride. We insist that we can do a number of things that we are simply not equipped to do. I have no doubt that it grieves our Heavenly Father far beyond my trivial frustrations with my children.

I have heard it said, "I'm a good person so I will go to Heaven" or, "I keep the 10 Commandments, that should count for something" and the classic, "It's not like I've killed anybody."

If I could save myself then why did Jesus have to die?

My Bible dedicates more than 1,100 pages (the entire Old Testament) to make one point. I am NOT good enough to save myself. I cannot follow any set of rules that will lead to salvation.

There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins. Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NIV)

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)

This Christmas we celebrate the coming of a Savior who lived the blameless life that we could never live, to pay a price we could never pay.



I became a Christian when I was six years old. I have never known a time in my life where Christ was not present. Even with that legacy I need to be reminded of my need for a Savior. There are times that my pride takes control and I start taking it all for granted. My life is pretty good, just good enough to lull me into thinking that *I am doing all right*. When in reality I am doing nothing. All that I have, all that I am, and, all that I will ever be is because of God and the ultimate sacrifice of *His* son.

(continued)

This year has been rich with blessing for us as a family and as individuals. Noah has made the big leap into the adventure of kindergarten while Kaara has started pre-school. Noah has played his last game of T-ball and will most likely start coach pitch in the spring. He played soccer this fall—even scoring a goal. It is bittersweet watching Kaara's and Noah's personalities manifest. Sweet because we get to watch God forming them into whom He would have them be yet, bitter because it is a reminder that soon they will be grown up. We wish you all a Merry Christmas!

May the gift you cherish most this Christmas be the gift of eternal life. May you walk in His embrace, letting Him do what you cannot do for yourself.

The Keener Family

www.keeners.net

According to the United Nations 1.1 billion people lack adequate drinking water and 2.6 billion people are without adequate water for sanitation. Without water for sewage disposal, cross-contamination of drinking water by untreated sewage is the chief adverse outcome of inadequate safe water supply. Consequently disease and significant deaths arise from people using contaminated water supplies; these effects are particularly pronounced for children in underdeveloped countries, *where 3900 children per day die of diarrhea alone.*²

The global water crisis claims more lives through disease than any war claims through guns. In fact, diarrhea kills six times more people than armed conflict. Of the people around the world who lack access to water, 720 million are in Asia. There are 2.6 billion people who lack access to sanitation, of whom 1.9 billion are in Asia.²

I am a professional Water Treatment Technician. I work to purify water for industry—electronics specifically. Over the last several months I have been increasingly burdened by the fact that every 17.6 seconds a child will die from water related illnesses.² People are dying for want of something most of us take for granted. I feel I can no longer stand by and do nothing.

Over the next few months I will be seeking out what God is doing to meet the needs of people in this area and how I can be a part of it. I would ask that you be praying for discernment and wisdom on my part as I follow His prompting and lead my family into this area.

If you would like to be kept up to date on what God is doing in this critical ministry please feel free ask. You can e-mail me at: patrickkeener@gmail.com or just ask me as our paths cross in every day life.

Pat

"Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you? Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, in as much as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'" Matthew 25:44-45 (NIV)



1. <http://www.nrdc.org/international/summit/summit3.asp>
2. <http://www.undp.or.id/press/view.asp?FileID=20061109-1&lang=en>