

# Merry Christmas! Campus Chronicles



December 17, 2007 Volume 4, Issue 4

## The Three Trees

*As told to Robin Sady by Emily (age 3) and her mom.*



One morning, my roommate and I were sitting on the couch in the living room, having coffee. We were a little tired from putting up Christmas decorations the night before. My roommate's three-year-old daughter, Emily, woke up and came out to the couch. She was rubbing her eyes and giving morning hugs when she noticed a wreath that had been hung on the wall. "Mommy, it's the three trees," she exclaimed! Her mom looked up and said, "Well yes, it is, isn't it?" I was a bit confused. "What are you guys talking about?" I asked.

"Well," said Priscilla. "It is a book that Emmie has. You see the wreath of wooden trees we put there? It looks like the trees in the story. It is a story about these three trees that were growing in the forest. They all had dreams of

greatness. One wanted to be a treasure chest and hold unknown amounts of gold. One wanted to become a huge ship that sailed across the oceans. The last one just wanted to be the tallest tree that ever lived, and be known for how great and strong he was. The trees discussed this daily, until one day, three woodcutters came and chopped them down. The first one was happy when he was carved into a chest, only to be disappointed when he was filled with feed and placed in a barn. The second was excited when he realized he was being fashioned into a boat! Then, before his dream was realized, he was left as a little fishing boat. The third tree was completely devastated, because he had been cut...

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## "Karma," Christmas, and the Cross

**Part 2 of a 2 part article by Dr. Premkumar Dharamaraj**

All of us have failed to keep the Law of God and are therefore, condemned by it. The Law can justify no one. However, our God is not only a God of Law, but also a God of Love. Though his Law condemns us, his love yearns to save us. So God came down to do something for our salvation. This is why there is a Christmas day!

God united himself organically with the human race in the person of Jesus Christ so that he could deal with the "karma" of humankind. God could neither ignore nor alter his Law in order to save us. So, Jesus Christ took all of our "karma" upon him and allowed the Law of Karma to operate on him as he sacrificed himself on the cross as our substitute. This is why the Holy Bible says, "He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our

iniquities . . . And by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Thus he delivered us from the hold of "karma" on our life and made forgiveness of sins possible and available to us!

The Holy Bible says, "He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross" (Colossians 2:13-14). The Law is against us because we have sinned and it stands opposed to us bringing the consequences of sin upon us. That is the way "karma" works! But God came down in the person of Jesus Christ to reap the results of our "karma." He reaped what we sowed so that we could reap the result of his saving

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Also in  
this issue:

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Be Yourself

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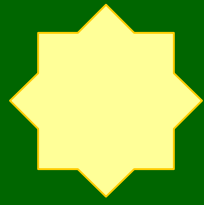
Making a  
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Christmas Break  
Begins December  
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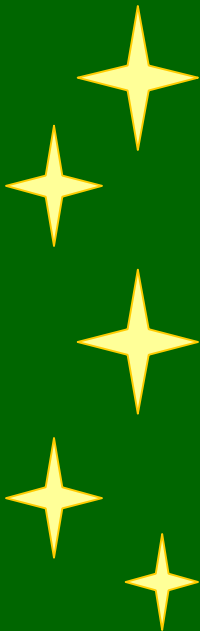
We'll see you back  
on Monday,  
January 7





UNTO  
US A  
CHILD  
IS  
BORN,  
TO US  
A SON  
IS  
GIVEN

ISA. 9:6



## Choosing to Be Yourself, By Isabel Mendez

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I find myself constantly trying to be someone I am not. Sometimes I wish I could be an awesome speaker like Joyce Meyer, or I wish I could sing like the worship leader in my church, or have a heart of giving like my mom. Then there are times I wish I looked like Jennifer Lopez. My mind seems to never think, "I want to be Isabel Mendez." I have to make the decision to love myself daily, and not to envy what others have.

I looked in scripture and discovered that even King David was tempted with trying to be someone he wasn't. In 1 Samuel 17, David took the challenge to fight Goliath, and King Saul offered David his armor.

Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them.

1 Samuel 17: 38-39a NIV

My question to you is; are you trying to wear someone else's armor? If you are, consider taking it off. When it comes to the battle, that armor might be more of a burden than a blessing if it is not made for you! David made the decision not to wear Saul's armor:

"I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. Then *he took his* staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

1 Samuel 17:39b-40 NIV

David was not afraid to be himself, I'm sure he looked like a fool out there, a little shepherd boy with a sling shot. Sometimes we feel that what we have looks stupid in comparison to what others have. However, if we can stay true to ourselves, and God's word we will be rewarded in the end.

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## Three Trees, *continued from page 1*

...down, cut into planks, and laid off to the side."

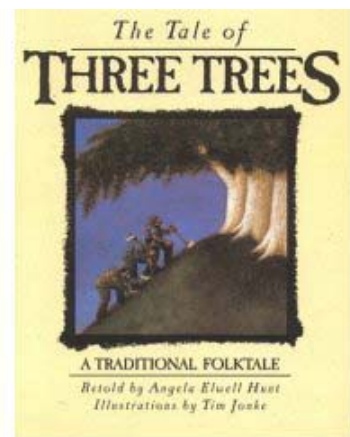
"Wow, that's a sad story. What's the point?" I asked.

"The trees didn't know either, but one day the first tree was emptied of animal food and a baby was placed in him. He knew his purpose. And as the second tree as a storm hit and a man took that little boat full of people and commanded the storm to calm, he understood his purpose. It took a little longer, for the third tree to understand his purpose, because as he was ripped from the pile a man's flesh was nailed to him. The tree felt ashamed and cruel. But as that tree was placed into the ground, that man forgave all sin. The tree knew that every time people looked to him, they would look to God. That meant so much more to the tree than being strong and tall!"

Emmie smiled and looked up at us. It suddenly occurred to me that hope can come from anywhere: even the mouth of a three year old. If you are feeling discouraged this season, just look around: You'll see Jesus everywhere. God

always gives us our dreams. Perhaps not necessarily in the manner we imagine, but in a much better way.

The book, *The Tale of Three Trees: A Traditional Folktale* is by Angela Elwell Hunt and Tim Jonke, and is available in most bookstores and book websites.





## ASB Christmas Celebration!

This Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, ASB will host a Christmas Celebration for all students and faculty during Chapel. You are asked to bring a plate of your favorite cookies, brownies, or other finger-food desserts to share. **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**



Photo by Andrew Johnson

### Chapel Speakers

12/17-AM

Tara Schowe

12/17-PM

Reba Jackson

12/18-AM

Dr. Roper

12/18-PM

Ron Smith

12/19-AM

Worship

12/20-AM & PM

Christmas Party

12/21-AM Prayer

## “Karma,” *continued from page 1*

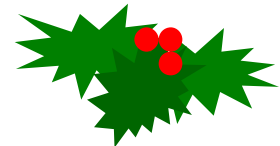
work! “Karma” also works in this way!

Salvation is the result of the work of God on our behalf. It is the gift of God to us! So we believe and receive it by faith. Very often the question is asked, “Salvation – by faith or by works?” Of course there is no salvation without works! The truth is that we could not save ourselves by our works and so God came down and did the work for us. That is the truth about Jesus Christ! So we are saved by his “karma” - by the offering of himself as a sacrifice for our sins! We are saved by our faith in the work the Lord Jesus Christ has done for our salvation.

The good news is: Your “karma” is taken care of by Jesus Christ who wants to forgive your sins! He is the answer to all those who are attempting to attain salvation by their works! God who knows our inability to do enough good work for our salvation, entered

into our human condition and did it all for us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The work has been done! So, don’t keep trying to do the work to save yourself! Start trusting in Jesus and the work he has done for you!

Forgiveness of sins is possible only by what God has done through Jesus Christ. And it is available to those who believe in the wonderful work of salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ for our sake. Remember, it all began on the first Christmas Day! So we can indeed have a “Merry Christmas” today! The “wonder” of Christmas is not just the celebration, but also the salvation that has come to us because of the birth of the Savior of the world. It is indeed the most wonderful time of the year to experience the forgiveness of sins, peace, and joy that Jesus alone can bring to each one of us.



## Be Yourself, *continued from page 2*

David challenged Goliath and killed the giant Philistine and afterward he was blessed with some of the finest armor:

Goliath had, a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels...

David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, and he put the Philistine's weapons in his own tent.

1 Samuel 17:5-7a, 1 Sam 17:54

David chose to use his own weapons and in return he ended up with Goliath’s armor—and the enemy’s head. The decision is yours, someone else’s armor or your own?

## Making a Difference, **By Liza Turner**

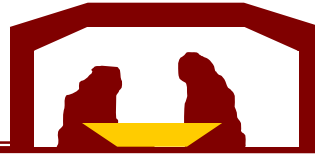
I really like listening to Dr. Dobson’s *Focus on the Family* radio broadcasts. Two recent broadcasts had to do with the trend of American retailers leaving *Christmas* out of the holiday season. The claim by corporate America is their obligation to meet the needs of a variety of cultures. This results in the censorship of Christmas as a religious holiday. As Christians why should we be surprised? Santa Claus has systematically been taking the place of the birth of our Savior for decades. Many Christians are offended and take a stand against this materialistic feeding frenzy on

Christmas. However, where should our injured feelings be focused: On the humanists who are behaving according to their own set of beliefs; or, the Christians in America who have let this degradation take place?

*Focus On The Family* received many positive responses to the first broadcast. There were some people who called or e-mailed accusing *Focus* of presenting bad information. Dr. Dobson

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informed listeners, in the second broadcast, that the information is based on catalogs, internet ads, and circulars. There were even responses from retailers, and there have been some positive changes since the first broadcast. For example, Alex Smith, the CEO of *Pier One Imports* responded with a letter stating that he had taken over as CEO during the last year. After listening to the first broadcast he re-examined the material and has changed their website to headline "A Very Merry Christmas." It is important to remember: as Christians we have a voice and the power given to us to make positive changes.

Also, during this update Dr. Dobson changed to a different, but related, subject when he praised *Wal-Mart* for stopping all corporate contributions to national homosexual activist groups. They are resisting the pressure to grant homosexual partners the same employee benefits as married couples.

In New Jersey, a bill to make gay marriage legal has been shelved. This was due to a great number of voting Christians making contact with state officials to pull the bill.

Last but not least, there's exciting news for Christians in California. The response against Senate Bill 777 is surging forward to stop this latest bill to stifle the biblical truth about homosexuality. It is bringing on a revival that could take America back to its biblical roots. Petitions to put this issue up for a vote of the people, are in the TLBC office. If enough signatures are put on the petitions, it could result in a Constitutional Amendment here in California.

Our passion for Christ is showing, as well as the power of our prayers to heal our land. We are making a difference!

## Announcements

### Troop Care Packages

Hundreds of thousands of US servicemen and women will be spending Christmas in. The American Bible Society wants to remind them that they are loved, at Christmas and all year round by putting together gift packages for our brave troops. You can personalize a message to the recipient and even send it to a particular serviceman or woman. Help the American Bible Society make this a great Christmas for our men and women in the military overseas, by going to this link: <https://www.christmasbibles.org/donation/contribute.php?origin=salemcbel>

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### TLBC Trip to Israel!

Greetings to You!

There is a great opportunity for you to advance mightily in your Christian walk as you walk "In the Footsteps of Jesus." Travel with TLBC to Israel from Monday February 25 through Friday March 7, 2008. We will visit exciting sites and listen again to the words of Jesus just as He taught His disciples over 2000 years ago. The memories will last a lifetime and the time spent here will change your life forever!

This amazing trip will last 12 days (instead of the usual 10) the cost of only \$3,275 per person will include airfare, land transportation, lodging, meals, baggage handling, tips, and great teaching. There will also be college credit available to those who wish.

Please pray about responding to God's call, and email or call me if you have any questions. Our personal tour is limited to the first 50 people, so please act quickly. You, your family, or your church members are more than welcome to respond. I look forward to hearing from you.

In Jesus,

*Pastor Ron Harden*

