

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship Professional Schools Ministries

An Update from John Terrill
December 2007

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Jesus and the Cold Stone

The Christian life is rooted in faith, and faith requires that we hold truths about God in perfect tension. One such truth that boggles my mind is the full humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. For me, it is often much easier to imagine Jesus as fully divine. The snapshots of his life we often celebrate and proclaim center on his heavenly power – standing up to Satan in the wilderness, driving out demons, healing the multitudes, raising the dead, and overcoming death on the cross. These images strengthen, embolden, and remind me that we serve a God who has conquered evil. Christ's humanity, though, does something different; it forces me to plumb the depths of my own personhood. Seeing Jesus weep over a friend, experience betrayal, and sweat blood invites me to feel and experience all of life fully, as God intends.



Birthing stones in the Central African Republic. Photo taken during Summer 2007.

I got a real-life opportunity “to plumb” such realities while in the Central African Republic this past summer. Staying in a guest house in Berberati, our team noticed large, cup-shaped stones atop a fence rail (see photo to the left). After asking questions of our host, we were told that the previous home owner collected birthing stones, which are commonly used by African mid-wives to catch the child and afterbirth. I stood there mesmerized, imagining the hundreds of African babies who took their first breaths nestled on the cold stones I now closely inspected.

My mind quickly drifted to the birth of Jesus, who broke into the world in similar fashion – not in a fancy neonatal ward, but rather wrapped in cloths and placed in a manger.

Right there, smack dab in the middle of Africa, as I dragged my fingers across the rough edges of the stone basins, I was reminded of the gift of Jesus' humanity. God's “only begotten son” birthed into the world to bring redemption and restoration. Humanity and divinity, kissing each other perfectly in Jesus, like a cold stone cradling new life in the heart of Africa. May you grasp fully the divinity and humanity of Jesus this Christmas.

Where I Have Been

The fall semester is always super busy, and this year has been no exception. Thanks for your sustaining prayers!



Art by Gary Nauman, Senior Graphic Designer for InterVarsity. For more of Gary's linoleum block prints, visit <http://blockprintpress.blogspot.com/>

Here's a snapshot of where I've been since I last wrote: **October 1-4**, InterVarsity fall leadership meetings in Madison, WI. **October 4-7**, Christian Business Faculty Association (and MBA missions) meetings in Seattle, WA. **October 16-18**, staff director spiritual formation meetings in Mundelein, IL. **October 23-26**, GFM staff directors' meetings and *Following Christ 08* task force meetings in Evanston, IL. **November 15-16**, Vision Campaign meeting in Haverford, PA. **November 30**, Vision Campaign meeting in Wheaton, IL. **December 4-5**, Christian Legal Society and InterVarsity Law School Ministry meetings in Westmont, IL.



Some of the members of our InterVarsity and Christian Legal Society working group. Clockwise from bottom left, Jeff Giissing, Sylvia Chen, Dan Kim, and David Nammo.

Thank You and Year-End Needs

I am deeply grateful for your prayers and financial gifts. As a small token of my appreciation, I have enclosed a bookmark from *Cards from Africa*, the first place winner in our *Open for Business* case competition at Urbana 06. *Cards from Africa* is a for-profit greeting card company that employs children who have been made orphans by either AIDS or the genocide in Rwanda. To learn more, visit <http://www.cardsfromafrica.com>.

As we close our calendar year, I would be grateful for your financial gifts and ongoing prayers. We have financial needs across the board and are working hard (and trusting God) to close the gap. Online gifts can be made at www.intervarsity.org/donate. Merry Christmas!