

THE STEELES



Apologies and “Buddy”

This update is long overdue and I would first like to begin with an apology for not sending these newsletters monthly as I originally committed to. So, I'm sorry. I would also like to re-commit to sending them quarterly as that feels, more realistic.

Now to more celebratory news (probably not news to you if you're reading this)!

Taryn gave birth to the miracle of Levi Allen Steele on May, 3 2011; just in time for Mother's day! It was amazing to

experience this free of complications and good health for both Taryn (who birthed that boy completely naturally- what a woman!) and Levi. The midwives who helped deliver Levi were joking around afterwards saying that the new mom may have broken the decibel sound record at the birthing center. They were great help and support to us along the way-thanks Polly and Janet! We also had the help and support of a very proud Grandma Cece who successfully snipped her first umbilical cord. We, along with many

friends and family have been enjoying the joy that Levi's presence and smile bring to the world! We are thankful beyond words for this special gift who I sing and dance with daily and refer to as “my buddy” very often.

Thank you for sharing all of your notes and cards and gifts and meals and phone calls and hugs and tears during this season of our lives.



CECE AND LEVI



SATURDAY MORNING



FATHER'S DAY

Transformation

In the Spring Taryn, I and six others who are a part of our core church plant team attended a Faithwalking retreat <http://www.faithwalkingonline.com/index.html>. The weekend centered on personal transformation in discipleship to Jesus. And although that's what the folks that facilitate the weekend would want me to say, the reality is that, that is indeed the reality-the weekend centered on personal transformation in discipleship to Jesus! So as that goes, it is a life-long process and we have been journeying with Him through all that was stirred up that weekend, individually and as a group via a more intense extension of the weekend called Faithwalking 201-a sixth month commitment to replacing negative vows and habitual disobedience with positive vows and increasing obedience.

A significant experience during the weekend for me involved finding my "voice" in being able to be authentic with God. Although i've known (in my head) that God wanted me to be honest with Him, what my belief (my actions) showed was God would be offended with my honesty; that if He really heard (as though I could hide anything) what I thought, or saw my heart, then He would be repulsed (as the self-improvement lie of religion has sold me). In being able to be increasingly free to identify and offer my false-self, He continues to reveal my true-self, and boy has it been nice meeting me. So this process has involved seeing the depths of my brokenness, which actually invokes the love of Jesus when I own my part in it, and the sheer delight He has in me no matter what.

I'm seeing how I never get to graduate from this program of death and rebirth, yet the magical invitation never gets old either.

And all that to say, if there's one thing I'm clear about, it's that He is the one doing the transforming and will teach through whatever means I'm open to.

Coach Steele

Taryn returned to working at Yellowstone Academy this year but in a different capacity, now as a part-time teacher.

In addition to teaching part-time Spanish, Taryn is also coaching Yellowstone's junior high girl's volleyball team. She recently told me how much she's enjoying coaching "those girls;" but the words weren't necessary for me to know that because it's obvious to see the joy that coaching is bringing her. The lady lions are off to a 3-1 start!

Gateway

On August, 22 several young adult men took a courageous step in choosing to move into a house together and engage in Agape Development's Gateway program: <http://agapedevelopment.org/news/new-gateway-format/>

Gateway works with young adults to help facilitate transition to healthy adulthood. I, along with several other Agape staff members have spent the last eight months in planning a revamp of this program and are excited about its changes. We are already seeing some of the fruit of this process as we are now "getting our hands dirty" in the day-to-day work of programming.

Personally I am involved in teaching various life-skill labs, facilitating support group and encouraging these guys every day as they encourage me through their own commitment to self-responsibility.

Road Trip

In the latter part of July, Taryn, Levi and I took a road trip to California. After experiencing a "difficult" day in the car we felt like we had been baptized into a new realm in our short stint at parenthood.

We stayed with special friends who were great hosts in San Antonio (thanks Dave and Denise)! And later on in Scottsdale (thanks Jon and Frank)!

Two speeding tickets later and with a good marital "conversation" under our belt, we decided that Taryn and Levi would fly back to Houston :).

In California I was taking two seminar classes at Fuller Theological Seminary that were rich in content and even better in the relationships with my cohort members.

The first week we stayed near the Fuller campus just north of Los Angeles. The second week we stayed with uncle John and aunt Kate Colosi in Orange County. It was a really sweet time with people we love dearly, and who dearly love us! Thanks John and Kate!

Thank You

And speaking of thank yous...thank you to those of you who have given finances to help me raise a salary with Agape Development! It has been neat to see money "show up," and I really get Who's behind that too.!

