



Bryan Family Update, December 2010 , West Point, New York

Harvest Foundation www.harvestfoundation.org

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“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:13



As we set our minds to 2011 we desire to live in the present, working hard, but also watchful for Jesus' return. With you we pledge to be good stewards of our time, the faith God has given, gifts/abilities, and relationships.



Jody and I (and the kiddos) have been deeply and practically encouraged by you this year. The financial help, notes/emails spurring us on, and sincere friendships help so much.

As I write 18-inches of snow begins to melt outside. The cadets are away on Christmas Leave, and West Point will remain a no-man's-land for the next 3 days. We have needed this break probably just as much as the cadets.

Here are some observations from this past year – that will set next year's ministry focus and work:

- Nothing new to you – but the Army needs **REST** and **BALANCE**. I think many of the Army's leaders learn to work at a frenzied, meet-mission-now pace at West Point, and take this intense work ethic into the Army. (I remember working at a NATO command years ago – and found it interesting that the Americans were the only ones working late . . .). Granted, the Army needs this kind of can-do, warrior work-ethic. Nobody wants a softer/gentler Army, right? Yet, senior Army leaders, and many of the spouses/teenagers I have interacted with over the past year look really tired! Many plead for ways to restore balance within their families, time spent with community/neighbors, and ultimately God and his people. As such, we look for deliberate ways we as a Church Community can say “no” to many good (but not necessary) things, and help the Church be a place of refreshment rather than busyness – Jesus' words now in mind, Matthew 11:28-30.
- There is a push in the Army for soldiers to be **FIT** – socially, physically, spiritually, and emotionally. I'm excited and thankful, since this Army mantra fits precisely into the Harvest Foundation's mission – really, God's mission for the reconciliation of ALL things.
- Jody and I were discussing recently how Army families need **social connection**. Many military families, especially the ones coming off of deployment, are looking for . . . love – that's probably the best word. Many are not satisfied with superficial relationships, and want to know others deeply, and to be fully known by others – to pray intentionally for others, and to have someone really pray with genuine concern. There is a growing need for home-groups, where families live as God's ambassadors, care well for each other, and authentically among one another.
- 4,400 bright-eyed college-aged cadets crave social interaction (much like every college campus) – that's why Chapel-sponsored gatherings like Officer Christian Fellowship, Genesis, Navigators, Baptist Student Union, Sunday School Teachers, etc., are so popular and well-attended. Many cadets are still learning what it is like to be away from home from the first time. Cadets are learning how to handle dating relationships and internet attractions/distractions – many need help in this area.

- Often I have been hearing of a **rift** between the “privileged military” who live on a nice, well-manicured federally-funded Army Post, and the off-Post New York neighbors – who pay high taxes and live in small towns in the shadow of West Point. To some, it has turned into a “we vs. they” mindset in our community – just visit the off-post diners and you’ll hear how people really feel. Some of the teenagers I’ve spoken with also experience the rift in the local high school where all students attend – as the clean-cut military kids jockey with the Highland Falls “small-town-America” kids. All of this means this: our aim is that our West Point Church begins to recognize the need for **social healing** – and pray that Jesus would be the unifier here – He is the answer!

Goals for the coming year:

Our family “theme” for the year will be: What does it mean to “**wait on the LORD?**” Please, if you have any good insight in this subject – I could use some help! We would be grateful for your thoughts! Please email us your thoughts, if you’d like! jebnjeb@hotmail.com

Other goals:

1. Intentionally disciple/mentor key men and cadets; build upon weekly Tuesday night dinner/discussions.
2. Help our Chaplain leaders re-think ways to minister to our Community.
3. Find new ways to include my wife and four children in weekly ministry activities.
4. Plan 3 seed projects – continue “mercy teams” to cadets on sick call, and train cadets to lead pornography help teams in their cadet companies.
5. Train new youth ministry leaders to be community healers – help them bridge social rift in our community between military and civilians.



Army-Navy Recap

It may be old news – but the annual Army-Navy occurred this past month – the score wasn’t anything good to report – but it was a truly unique event. In an intense academic and rigid military setting it is one of the rare times when people stop and, do I dare say, “play”.

About a million (no exaggeration) push-ups were pushed out – and a few cadets probably got bonus-points on their quizzes for just writing “Beat Navy” on the paper.

Though I cringe at the pro-Navy publicity here, last week a sailboat found its way onto the parade field – one of the many “spirit missions” that show off the Army-Navy rivalry. It was good for our Nation to remember the military over the celebration of a football game – especially those separated by deployment – **Kevin/Adra** we think of you especially – and

are impressed by your courage – certainly your focus to grow and love others around you, pointing them to the One who is full of grace and truth.

Reason for Prayer:

- We continue to remember the **Debos family** in prayer – you may remember we requested your prayer for this precious family as they walk through the treatment of Inflammatory Breast Cancer together. They commute each week from West Point to Washington DC for treatment. Will you continue to pray for healing, and for our community to keep finding creative, and certainly meaningful, ways we can be of practical help?
- **MLK-Weekend** – we plan to take 50 cadets away for refreshment and good teaching. Please pray that our time will be fruitful, meaningful, and restful.