

Dear Family:

29 March 2004

We're closing in on the first weekend in April, but I'm not especially looking forward to moving the clocks. Oh, sure, it's magnificent driving home from work through Rock Creek Park in the daylight. But there's just something about being awakened by the alarm clock at 4:54 am (and then occasionally re-awakened by the backup alarm clock at 5:01), negotiating my extended quasi-metrosexual morning hygiene routine, driving to the church, teaching a 50-minute seminary lesson (unless everybody's late), waiting for everyone's ride to (hopefully) show up, locking the building and then, after all that, *still needing to drive using the \$%&#\*#@! headlights* that depresses the life out of me. After nearly three months of that, our mornings are finally starting to get lighter again. But after this weekend we'll be right back in it, and I just might have to give Zoloft a try...or Wellbutrin, or Paxil or some other happy pill. I'm open to suggestions.

A possible non-pharmacological remedy might include improved attendance and promptness from my students. We've experienced a noticeable drop-off in both recently. I don't know whether to attribute it to the time of year, the fact that we're exactly in the middle of Isaiah, or what. The class consists of a hybrid of students from our ward and from a Spanish-speaking branch that meets in the same building. Attendance among the Spanish branch students (who all speak English—their parents don't) is significantly more sporadic. Periodically, the branch president reports to me that he's making a special push on Sunday to encourage the parents to drag themselves out of bed and drive their kids to seminary. Yesterday must have been one of those push days as we had a pretty good crowd this morning. But, if history holds, we'll be back to normal tomorrow. Fortunately, there'll always be that handful of faithful stalwarts who come and participate and make it all worthwhile.

And just like that, without much effort, what was meant to be an offbeat introduction grew to two paragraphs, making my entire existence sound like little more than one continuous Sisyphean bout with clinical depression.

It isn't really. In fact, just two weekends ago, we partied it up big-time with Pete and some of his closest family and friends in celebration of his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. All of us metro Washingtonians (including Coco) made the trip to Moorestown for an evening of reminiscing about Pete's life and the interesting way in which he's brought many of us closer together. We all stuck around for Sunday services so that we could witness and/or take part in Grant's blessing of Uncle Pete's newest nephew, Peter Cannon Willis. In retrospect, it's only fitting that it was performed in Peter Henrichsen Willis's ward. He's always been a proud uncle, but seemingly never more so than now that he's a namesake.

Apart from that we went nowhere this month. Good thing for that long intro!

Many of you (probably all of you who actually read this) already know that, for the past year or so, we've been having on-again, off-again discussions with various contractors about extensively renovating and adding on to our little house. We'd now like everyone to know that we finally signed a contract and wrote a big check over the weekend. As a result, the next several letters figure to contain all the exciting details of life in a construction zone.

Until then you're stuck with this. Have a nice month.

Love,  
Tim