

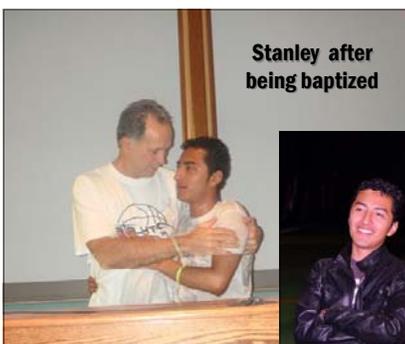
## Buried with Him in baptism...

After the van pulled up to Shawnee Hills Baptist church an hour before departing for the airport, fifteen coaches from various countries piled out of the van. Once inside the church, the coaches gathered around the baptismal to witness the baptism of Stanley from Guatemala.

During an interview with an AIA Staff member at the end of the AIA International Basketball Coaches Academy, Stanly stated, "What I learned is that I need to accept Jesus. I want to accept Jesus, and I want to be baptized before I leave to go back to Guatemala."

Stanley is one of eight coaches who prayed to accept Jesus into his life during the Coaches Academy in November. One of the other coaches also expressed a desire to be baptized when he returns next year. I thought you would be excited to hear some results from this part of our ministry which I described in my November letter.

Please pray for Stanley and the other new believers. Pray that each one will stand firm in his faith. Also, pray for several other Academy participants who are wrestling with the decision to place their faith in Christ.



Stanley after being baptized



Stanley (left) with other Academy participants

...raised  
to walk in newness of life.

## What are you doing now?

Now that Ed and I have finished our support-raising, Ed has been assigned to work in the Ministry Advancement department. He will be building relationships with ministry partners who give to the overall ministry of Athletes in Action.

For now, Ed is in a learning and training phase, which means he is spending much of his time in meetings with various departments in AIA in order to learn about their strategies and needs for financial support. He will eventually use this information as he communicates options for where ministry partners can contribute within our ministry.



Ed and Debbie with Ed's new staff team

I have returned to my role on the Sports Complex team as the challenge course director. During our off-season, we are doing some strategic planning and marketing. In mid-February, I will attend an annual challenge course symposium in Boston.

The first weekend in February, Ed and I will both assist with the **Super Bowl Breakfast**, which is an evangelical outreach to business executives. Bart Starr will personally present the Bart Starr Award to a current NFL player, voted on by his peers, for outstanding character and leadership.

This year's Super Bowl Breakfast will be held in Indianapolis, at the Indiana State Fairgrounds on Saturday, February 4, from 8-10 a.m. Ed will assist with building relationships with ministry partners who will be present. I will serve as the volunteer coordinator to oversee all the volunteers who help with this event.

## Upcoming Events

**Jan. 13-15:** Student Venture retreat at our Conf. Center (over 300 high school students)

**Jan. 14-21:** Gersch's vacation— we are finally taking our honeymoon. Yippee!

**Jan. 27-29:** AIA Campus Ministry Winter Retreat (over 200 college students)

**Feb. 2-5:** Ed and Debbie will be assisting with the Super Bowl Breakfast, which is an outreach to executives in Indianapolis.

**Feb. 8-12:** Debbie will attend the annual Association of Challenge Course Technology symposium in Boston.

## Thank God For...

- ❖ Wonderful time with family and friends over the holidays
- ❖ Eight coaches prayed to accept Christ during the 2011 AIA Basketball International Coaches Academy
- ❖ All His blessings from 2011

## Please pray for...

- ❖ Ed's learning process as he grows in his understanding of all the parts of our AIA ministry so that he can represent our needs well to potential ministry partners.
- ❖ Wisdom for Debbie and Bryan (co-Challenge Course Director) as we do some strategic planning for the next year for the challenge course.
- ❖ Effective ministry for each upcoming retreat being hosted at our facilities.
- ❖ All the logistics to work out smoothly and God to be glorified through the Super Bowl Breakfast.
- ❖ That many lives will be changed with the gospel at the Super Bowl Breakfast.



Fun with our nieces and nephews over Christmas break

## ❖ From The Heart (by Debbie) ❖ ❖ Something to Think About (by Ed) ❖

*While we were in Oklahoma for Christmas vacation, we had the opportunity to visit two special women. Both are widows. One is eighty six and the other is ninety. Both of these women have been faithful partners with us for many years. We enjoyed hearing stories from their lives.*

*Leola, who lives in the independent apartment wing of an assisted living facility still faithfully visits other shut-ins in the facility. She also has a vital prayer and encouragement ministry as she prays for and writes to many missionaries and others whom she has met over the years.*

*Inspired by Elma Jean's and Leola's faithfulness to the Lord even in these later years of their lives, I (Debbie) was reminded of the song by Steve Green called "Find us Faithful". In case you've never heard it, here are the words to the first verse and chorus:*

*We're pilgrims on the journey of the narrow road. And those who've gone before us line the way, Cheering on the faithful, encouraging the weary. Their lives a stirring testament to God's sustaining grace.*

*Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses. Let us run the race not only for the prize. But as those who've gone before us, Let us leave to those behind us The heritage of faithfulness passed on through godly lives*

### CHORUS:

*Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful  
May the fire of our devotion light their way  
May the footprints that we leave  
Lead them to believe  
And the lives we live inspire them to obey*

*As we begin a new year, it is our prayer that we could live out the words of this inspiring song (based on Hebrews 12:1-3). May all who come behind us find us faithful!*

*We hope that your new year is off to a great start. May the Lord bring many new blessings your way in 2012! Thank you so much for your faithful partnership with us as we seek to inspire others towards a deeper relationship with Christ! We appreciate you!*

Ed & Debbie ☺