



This picture is a picture of a portion of a power supply chord for my daughter Nicole's computer. She purchased it online and has used it for quite some time...even though it gets very warm while in use. Would you be comfortable using this power supply? I wouldn't! Can you figure out why?

2011 has just passed and like every year we had the opportunity to finish it in a variety of ways. One of the things I love about celebrating the birth of Jesus at the end of December is that it gives me the opportunity to put the whole year in perspective and to make a new commitment to living for Jesus in the coming year. That has not always been the case in my life. Christmas was about the party--family, friends, food and presents--and not about faith matters. Of course, there was always the nod to the Nativity with a late evening Christmas Eve service and my most religious side would come out of the bag for awhile.

Then there was New Years Eve. Depending on the year that night was all about food and frivolity. What often followed on New Years Day was an attempt to get over the night before and enjoy a whole lot of football. What I thought of as fun was really just foolishness.

This is a new year! A new chance to replace my "replavement" life. I love that about years...but I love that more about Jesus. Each year--actually moment--can be a fresh start. Are you living and experiencing the life that Father God really intended? When was the last time the Spirit helped you through a life change that set you free from the past and gave you a new vision for the future?

John 10:10 reads: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." This is a great section of the Bible for us to consider as we begin a new year--particularly since Jesus is doing the teaching. The devil wants to steal joy, kill peace and destroy contentment. That is part of his master plan. If he can't keep us from becoming a believer in Jesus, he will keep us from becoming effective believers.

As we enter into 2012, let us do so with eyes and hearts wide open for what God--Father, Son and Spirit--wants to do in and through us. Consider 2 Peter 1:3-11...

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

*For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins."*

Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

The italics are mine and I put them there because that is a vitally important part of the passage. With Jesus, there will always be an *increasing measure* for us to receive from Him and to struggle toward. Have we "replaved" God's plan for our lives with something that we are comfortable with and understand? Even a replacement would be better, since that would be an obvious error. A "replavement" is something that you think is just fine but could be doing real damage to what is most important.

A New Year=A New Start! What will be your "increasing measure" this year?

Michael < +