

AUGUST
TWENTY:13

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Delicate Arch in Utah

Our family recently returned from our bi-annual Cru staff conference in Colorado. It is always an outstanding time to gather with more than 6000 of our 'friends'- fellow staff- for a time of development, teaching, connection and refreshment. We always return refueled in our vision and our connection to the mission.

This year was also fun in that we drove and visited 4 National Parks. 2 on the way, and 2 on our return [Arches, Canyonlands, Rocky Mountain and Grand Canyon]. Our kids seemed to have a love/hate experience with the parks...mostly hate and mostly 'why are we walking so far?' **Forced fun is epic!**

One of the mornings at the conference, I was feeling a bit restless.

Kyle, "...do you love me?"

Then the speaker took us to John 21- where Jesus returns to see his friends back in their old way of life...fishing for fish. Many Bibles call the section, Jesus Reinstates Peter...or something like that. But, it really struck me that morning. As many have read before, Jesus asks Peter 2 times...Do you agapao me? [Do you love me with a sacrificial type... challenging love]. Peter responds to both, "Lord you know I phileo you" [I love you with a lesser affection]. Then Jesus asks, "Do you phileo me?" and Peter responds, that Jesus knows that he loves him that way.

What struck me was how Peter must have been feeling...like a failure. He had let his Lord down. He still felt affection, but I'm sure he also felt shamed and disconnected. He may have lost hope. And yet Jesus still called Peter to a high level of connection, commitment and was ready to lift Peter up. Jesus seems to kneel down...lower the level of

calling...to meet Peter where he was at. I was in awe of how Jesus does that with me and with each of us. Challenging us to more, yet with patience to always meet us where we are at. Willing to kneel and pick us up in our times of disconnection and shame.

We pray that this summer has been a time where each of you have felt refueled and that you experience Jesus in new, fresh ways.

Your partnership is helping build the Kingdom and we are so appreciative of your commitment to this ministry!



6000 of our closest friends...



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