



MAY 2019

This year has been difficult.

I write this not to garner pity, or sympathy, but simply in an attempt to not sugar-coat the realities of missionary life, and hopefully give glory to our God in the process.

This year has been one of the most difficult I can remember. It feels our family has been tested in every way; physically, mentally, emotionally, relationally, financially. We have often felt thin and hard pressed.

We had many ministry problems that needed to be solved - some that still aren't solved. Disappointments and unmet expectations piled up. "Are we even making a difference?," we wondered.

By the end of the school year, we both felt pretty worn. So much so that both of us began daydreaming about getting out of ministry, doing another job. Something easier, something that was truly "9-5", something less taxing spiritually and emotionally. Anything. We had to be doing something wrong if ministry was so hard and came with so many trials.



While all of this was bouncing around in our heads, we spent some time with a few members of our team. While were together, somehow the topic of the missionary Adoniram Judson came up. One of our teammates read aloud the letter he wrote to his prospective Father-in-Law, asking for permission to marry his daughter. It read as follows:

"I have now to ask whether you can consent to part with your daughter early next spring, to see her no more in this world? Whether you can consent to her departure to a heathen land, and her subjection to the hardships and sufferings of a missionary life? Whether you can consent to her exposure to the dangers of the ocean; to the fatal influence of the southern climate of India; to every kind of want and distress; to degradation, insult, persecution, and perhaps a violent death? Can you consent to all this, for the sake of Him who left His heavenly home and died for her and for you; for the sake of perishing, immortal souls; for the sake of Zion and the glory of God? Can you consent to all this, in hope of soon meeting your daughter in the world of glory, with a crown of righteousness brightened by the acclamations of praise which shall resound to her Saviour from heathens saved, through her means, from eternal woe and despair?"

Upon hearing that read, I was filled with both conviction and hope. Conviction that our sufferings are so light in comparison to those of others, especially other missionaries, and that I was still inclined to be wearied from them. But also hope that not only is what we are experiencing *normal*, but it is for "the sake of perishing, immortal souls, the sake of Zion and the glory of God." Two things which I believe wholeheartedly to be worth anything. We know you do, too - thank you.

Yours in Christ,

Clay + Emily



Another year over, and a bit of a break from our steady diet of pizza - for now. Next year I'll keep track of how much we go through!



In the interim between school ending and our summer assignment, Emily has been busy updating our advertising materials.



We had the privilege to challenge Sunjoon, one of the women in Emily's Bible study, to be a leader with Cru next year!

FAMILY UPDATE

ELLIOTT TURNED ONE!

Elliott celebrated his first birthday on Saturday, May 11th. We had a small party in our backyard with family and friends. He thoroughly enjoyed his cake, as you can see! He is learning how to walk, is beginning to say a few more words, and loves to play simple games with his mom and dad. He is healthy and doing well, and we are grateful for your prayers for him over the last year.



WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS...

If we were superstitious people, the adage “bad things happen in threes” would feel accurate right now! Over the past week our water heater died, we got hit with a storm that produced some nearly golf-ball-sized hail, and our cat injured himself and required x-rays. Phew!

Fortunately, all of these problems are small problems, but it definitely threw us for a loop as we are trying to raise some more support, update Southeast Ohio Cru’s marketing materials for the fall, and do the required pre-assignments for our Bible courses before we leave in June.

On that note - my family’s hometown of Dayton was hit by several tornadoes on Monday night. My sister and my parents and their homes are safe, but many of our other friends and acquaintances are not. Please pray for them.



PRAISE + PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God that my family and their homes were kept safe in the outbreak of tornadoes!
- Pray for Clay and I as we start our Bible coursework. We are doing a lot of reading and preparing before we leave to take the actual classes in June and July.
- Please continue to for us as we continue to work on raising more financial ministry partners. Pray that the Lord would provide for us, and that we would work hard and be focused on the task.
- Clay will be driving out to Colorado beginning on June 14th, and Emily and Elliott will fly out to meet him on June 17th. Please pray for safe travels for all of us.