



FEBRUARY 2023

"I knew that I was supposed to be here the moment you said that."

I (Clay) was meeting with a couple of students who filled out our New Year's questionnaire. One, Josh, came from a Catholic background, while the other, Ricky had grown up Baptist but stopped going to church when he was about 11 years old. One of my disciples (mentee), Matthew and I were meeting with these two on your average Tuesday afternoon.

As I began to share the gospel with them, it became clear that Ricky especially was connecting with a lot of what we were discussing. We eventually got to the point of discussing how we should respond to Jesus' death and resurrection. In the diagram, the circle on the left describes a life without Christ, while the circle on the right describes a life entrusted to Christ.



SELF-DIRECTED LIFE

You are in control and Jesus has no influence in your life. People like this have never received Jesus into their lives. They remain guilty and cut off from God by their sin.



CHRIST-DIRECTED LIFE

Jesus is in control and you are following Him as Lord. People like this have received Jesus into their lives. They have been forgiven and experience God's love.

I proceeded to explain Jesus' offer the way I usually do on a college campus: *"Imagine this is you in the left hand circle. You're in the driver's seat of your car, but you're intoxicated and in no shape to drive. There's a person knocking on the driver's side window offering to drive, but you won't let them. Now imagine in the circle on the right, you've let that person in the car, you've hoped in the passenger's seat, and you have faith in that person to get you home. That's what Jesus offers."*

After we finished chatting as a group and as Josh left, Ricky asked if he could hang back for a few extra minutes. He went on to tell me this:

"I had this feeling that I needed to come back to God again. I knew I was supposed to be here the moment you said that about being intoxicated because I got a DUI a couple of months ago."

I was left stunned. I've given many different analogies over the years to describe trusting Christ, yet something like that had never happened. It became clear that God wanted me there in that moment, especially seeing as I'm the only one I know who uses this comparison.

Ricky left that day indicating that he wanted to place his faith in Jesus. Please pray that as I meet with him in the coming days for his confidence in that decision and what it will mean for his life.

*Name changed for his privacy

Yours in Christ,

Clay + Emily

FAMILY UPDATE

We are all well and healthy! We enjoyed a lovely Christmas with our families, managed to take the entire family to Winter Conference (and survived!), and have settled back into the routine of family life together.

There is one thing we'd ask you to pray for our family. We've hesitated to share this out of concern for Elliott's privacy, but we'd really appreciate your prayers. As Elliott has grown and gotten older, it's become more obvious that while he is of incredibly high intelligence, some of his behavior and social development is atypical. For the last year, we've been working with his pediatrician, a child psychologist, and a team of occupational and speech therapists. The initial diagnosis we were given was Sensory Processing Disorder, but they've now rescinded that and are looking at something like Attention Deficit Disorder or Autism.

He is a delightful little boy with high intelligence, and we love every bit of him. We don't really care what diagnosis they come up with, we just want to be able to give him the support he needs to thrive and flourish. Please be praying for the doctors, therapists, and our family as we continue to work to find the best ways to support Elliott.



PRAISE + PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God for Ricky and his desire to give his life to Jesus. Please pray that he would fully surrender and would begin to grow as a new believer.
- Pray for our upcoming Spring Break trip to Gatlinburg, TN.
- Pray for our partnership locations in SE Asia and Slovakia. The changing landscape of our staff team capacity and the world as a whole has made it challenging to do ministry in these locations.
- Pray for our family as we continue to seek to honor God with our lives and serve him as missionaries. Pray for Elliott and his needs. Specifically, please pray for sleep. Elliott's (and thus our) sleep has been very disrupted and we are all tired.