

THE HARVESTER

APRIL 2021



Dan & Heather Litchfield
ThriveAdventures.org

So that communities will
know Christ and live like
Him

A TIME TO WEEP, AND A TIME TO LAUGH; A TIME TO MOURN, AND A TIME TO DANCE... ECCLESIASTES 3:4

We have spent the past weeks in a cyclone of emotion.

Since March Dan has been mentoring Brian in a discipleship relationship. They have hiked together, fixed trucks, prayed, talked, read the Bible, and shared life. Dan has shared the Gospel in its fullness, and been encouraged by this deepened friendship with a guy who shares his interests. As a young believer in the midst of a painful separation, Brian has been ravenous for spiritual growth. This winter he attended our online marriage moments on his own, seeking ways to restore his marriage. He began talking with his pastor and meeting with Dan, eager to grow not just for the sake of his family but out of a newfound reliance on and swelling joy in the Lord. It has been inspiring to see his transformation.

One recent evening we were driving home from a friend's house when Brian's wife called worried

that he was an hour late picking up their son and he wasn't answering his phone. We drove straight to his apartment only to find his cars there and a light on inside but no response to our banging on the door. When Dan got in the house, he discovered his friend cold and lifeless in a chair. There was no sign of struggle, no trauma, no evidence of self-harm.

Shock. His wife and I waited until 1:30am when police removed the body. Their 7 year-old son played at our house until we all returned to our house to lie in bed, numb and devastated. Oddly, 5 hours later I rose to make Micah's 14th birthday breakfast and rally a spark of celebratory spirit. We took photos, ate cake, fiercely grateful for our son, and yet hollowed out by grief.

How could we sing in the morning over our son, Micah, and cry in our beds at night over Brian and the son he left behind? And yet that is the stark reality we live in... a finite

time on earth, subject to God's righteous plan, within which we spend our days, investing them as best we can. We want to reach out and snatch back the moments with Brian and hang on to them to make them last. Instead, we have new moments every day with people around us. We have new chances to build friendships, to make new memories with those we love, and to impart Good News to others. In this world we have death and life in the same day.

I have no doubt that today Brian is rejoicing in the stunning, immense, wondrous presence of God, hiking the heavenly hills in the company of the saints. "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,"

(2 Corinthians 4:16,17.)

PRAYER REQUEST

Please join us in praying for our friend Brian's wife, and especially his son, that they would draw near to God through this tragic loss.

Pray for Dan as he gives sermons and shares about Thrive at different churches in the coming weeks.

Join us in praying for the lost in our communities and for the loving, bold witness of the Body of Christ.

Pray for the ministry of Thrive to be faith-filled, Christ-centered, and fruit bearing by His grace.

May 21-25 is our national Thrive meeting in North Carolina. Please pray for our teams as we come together to mutually encourage one another and to seek God's guidance.

Praise the Lord for the new sea kayaks and paddleboards He has provided, and for the abolition of the mask mandate outdoors.

Pray for the new programs we are developing for mothers and retirees.

For Caleb, graduating May 15th!



Aliza's devotional group, "Bloom," meets weekly at our house to pray and read the Word. These tweens are developing a heart for God and growing together in Christ. Our dog, Jaunty, loves this group!

PRAYING ON PURPOSE

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances” (1 Thess 5:17)

The last thing Dan and Brian did together was to pray. That was the day before Brian stepped into heaven. I am struck by the fact that they were talking with God together, and the next day Brian was with the Lord, talking to Him face to face. What a privilege we have to converse with the living God on this side of heaven! How remarkable that we can begin a relationship *now* with the King of Kings that will continue for all *eternity*.

Have you ever been introduced to someone over the phone or online and then had the chance to meet them in person? That is how it will be with Christ—only better. We will finally see the One that we know and love. May our prayer times fill us with anticipation of that future

encounter.

We have constant access to God through prayer. No matter what is taken from us, or where we find ourselves, we will always be able to commune with God, and thanks to the Holy Spirit, He will always be with us. No one can peel Christ out of us and we have God's ear all the time. That alone makes me want to pray!

When given the invitation to pray, do it! It is an honor and an extension of God's grace. Plus, there is an endless list of things to lay at God's feet. We will never exhaust the Lord with our worship or our need. Let's thank Him for that right now!

*We pray for Thrive and **you** every Monday at 7am. Join us!