

The Selways

Clay & Emily

Life Lessons

Just over four months ago, we got married and embarked on the crazy adventure that has been joining staff with Cru. While it's definitely been a time filled with so much good and tons of blessings, it's also been really difficult in ways. Getting married, spending five weeks in a dorm room at New Staff Training, moving, and starting in a new ministry is a lot to take in in four months! We both decided to take some time to reflect on what we've been struggling with, and what the Lord has been teaching us in this season so that we could share it with you.



Cru at Ohio U
September 27, 2014

Emily

As I reflect on the past four months of marriage, a clear theme that emerges amongst the chaos is "control." (I've always been a bit of a control-freak, to be honest.) The circumstances of life that followed our wedding have included lots of change, and plenty of ambiguity. Personally, I found both of these things very, very difficult. My sinful response when I feel these stressors is to plan more, do more, control MORE. Unfortunately for Clay, that often looks like plan (Clay) more, (make Clay) do more, control (Clay) MORE.

New Staff Training, moving, and beginning our ministry caused more than a few fights, and put a strain on our new marriage. In one particular outburst, I exclaimed in frustration, *"I don't want to rule the world. I just want to rule my world!"* Whoa. The heart can be pretty ugly when it's revealed in moments like that.

After some very honest conversations, and some focused time in prayer, I realized something: My husband is my teammate, not my tool. And our ministry together is God's tool, not my identity. These two very important distinctions are helping me to learn how to relax and let go of the control I often feel compelled to have.

Right now, there is so much of our life that is out of our hands, especially concerning when and how we will finish our Ministry Partner team and be able to report to our campus assignment. But I am trying to learn this lesson, and every day attempting to choose to be ok with not being in control!

Clay

It is remarkable how much being married changes things. While these are almost exclusively in good ways and I love being married, I initially had a lot of trouble adjusting to this idea of how everything that I did affects her. If I want to eat out, it messes with her dinner she wants to make. If I do not read my Bible or my quiet time in prayer, I am more likely to lash out at her. When I focus on ministry all day, I frequently just want to collapse on the couch, read, watch Netflix, and forget about everything else. I love nothing more than an episode of Law and Order while eating a bowl of Chipotle. This is physically bad for me, spiritually and emotionally hard for my wife, and she needs more than that.

The biggest adjustment I have had to make is seeing my marriage as my primary ministry. Even though my job title says missionary, I will always be a husband and need to minister to my wife. When our marriage suffers, our ministry together (and separately) suffers. These first few months of marriage have become really sweet as I continually recognize my need for Jesus and rely on him more day by day than I believe I ever have before. By fixing my eyes on Christ, I can then go out and serve others, first and foremost Emily.

What We're Into Now

Food: Homemade BBQ chicken pizza

Music: "Anomaly" by Lecrae

Book: "The God Ask" by Steve Shadrach

Blog: charliessong.com (OK, this is Emily's recommendation. But it's really good.)

Resource: net.bible.org (Free online in-depth Bible study resource.)

Til the whole world knows,

Clay + Emily

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Prayer Requests for The Selways - October

Stick this card anywhere that will remind you to pray!

1. For OU's upcoming Fall Retreat - **October 3rd-5th**

- That many students would go.
- That unbelievers who attend would come to Christ.
- That believers would have their hearts changed to desire to reach out to their fellow students.
- That lifelong friendships would be formed over these 3 days, and lives would be changed.
- For the practicalities: Enough food, enough rides, and good weather.

2. For us, as we continue to work on finishing our required seminary course and developing our Ministry Partner team so that we can return to campus.

We are praying to return in January, in time for spring semester.

3. Emily has been feeling unwell, and has been at the doctor's often. But, she has been able to develop a relationship with the receptionist. Please be praying for the opportunity to share the gospel with her!

If we can be praying for you in any way, please let us know!

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