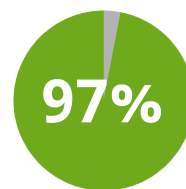


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The Road Less Traveled



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SUPPORT PLEDGED



HAITI

The following journal entry takes place while completing one of the steps in our deputation process which is to attend a two week class on how to learn a new language and how to understand how that language relates to the culture. We were assigned during the class to write a reflective paper about how we are feeling, growing, and our thoughts of integrating language and culture to our ministry. Anyone who knows me really well, knows that prior to this class I was really afraid of the language learning process and prior to this training had been struggling with this season that God had our family in. We were in a place where our fundraising had hit a plateau and I was struggling with God's timing and purpose for us in this time.

Please read the story below and think about it in terms of your own life and walk with God. Where are you at and what road is God asking you to travel down?

While enjoying the countryside of North Carolina via cycling after completing this day's class on Second Language Acquisition, I came across an old road that caught my attention and possibly best classifies my outlook of learning a new language and culture as well as, the spiritual and emotional path my family has been on during this process of transitioning from being a missionary in my everyday life (where I live and work) to working in the mission field. The following visually describes a little about where I have been, what I can see ahead, and where I have confidence that God will give me the strength to end up.

Initially this journey that our family has been on, the road has been paved and pretty smooth. We have encountered some discomfort creeping in on the sides that is causing us to grow and be stretched but overall we can see where we are going, as well as, look back and see where we have been without much trouble. As I look to the right I can see the barb wire protecting me from danger, but on my left I may be tempted to look over and step off the road into the wild brush, but overall the path is pretty clear and easy to stay on track.

With the confidence of God's calling on our lives we knew where we were going but the further we traveled down this "Newly Appointed Missionary", the path quickly became more difficult to follow with patches of "the Way" sparsely showing me the path.

Insecurities that I have never experienced struck me with such intensity I felt rendered nearly useless.

Insecurities such as:

- Depression
- Personal Identity
- Not Good Enough
- No Turning Back
- Intangible Goals

All of these emotions flooded in from the edges, hitting me like a ton of bricks. The path nearly and instantly became unclear from all directions. With conversation and prayer with other Christian brothers and sisters it seemed as if nothing helped, as if the path was dark and I was stuck, and had no idea which way to move.

With Prayer and Meditation of Isaiah 61:1 "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound." I took a look back to see how far I had come, though a little weary today I could see truly how far I had come in this journey and how I can already see the changes in

my life that are preparing me to live and serve as a Haitian Creole speaking Christian, sharing the Good News, and creating disciples along with my brothers and sisters in Christ.

As I looked back with weight on my shoulders I could see where “the Lord God has and will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.” (Isa. 61:11b) And specifically in my walk how like so many times before has turned me around and given me faith to find the path set before me.

Because of God’s Grace and Mercy:

- I can forge the path up the scary hill
- I am a disciple sent out to disciple others
- I am forgiven and redeemed
- I am assured that God works for good in all circumstances
- I will stumble, but Jesus is there to help me up

God continues to give me reminders of how quickly the path can become crowded with debris and that His light will continue to guide me to the ends of the Earth. These preparations in the deputation process have already been helpful combining the culture and language as well as viewing the different facets of Spirituality to help clarify and identify the many different faces of God.

Moving forward and into the field I am going to need to seek first God and when I am in the down times or starting my way into the wilderness, I will remember and identify where I am, what I have experienced and where I have come from as a way to identify pitfalls before I am in the midst and to help clarify where I am going.

I pray that as you read this if you have identified with a point on this road, and are currently in the trenches with one of these points, that you will look to Isaiah 61 for strength and encouragement to persevere and know that God has not changed or moved and to keep enduring this storm with a laser like focus on Him.