

# MISSIONARY #6501

January 2016



## A Time to Weep and a Time to Laugh

Life mirrors weather in its cycle of seasons. Some days here in Asia, the weather seems to hit all four seasons in a single day. Emotional patterns can prove equally unpredictable. As we focus on language acquisition, team organization and growth, soul winning and discipleship, laying the groundwork for church planting, writing, and serving in an advisory role on various Bible translation projects, we vacillate between weeping and laughter almost on a daily basis.

Child rearing brings both laughter and tears. The other day I asked our three-year-old son whether he was a boy or a girl. As expected, he got it right on the first guess. I then asked, "What if we had named you Josephine; what would that make you?" His reply was instantaneous, "It would make me mad!" The tears came a few weeks later when he came to me saying, "I want to get saved!" Please pray that our two youngest will understand and believe the Gospel like their 14 older siblings have. Our oldest son gets married in April. One of our daughters is now teaching at Roanoke Baptist School. Another daughter and her husband are expecting our first grandchild!

Discipleship brings both laughter and tears, especially when the language is foreign. The other day I used my Turkish to ask a young man I am discipling how he was doing. He replied in English, "Not bad." I then enquired in Turkish about how his mother was doing, to which he responded with enthusiasm, "Oh, very, very, not bad!" It makes me wonder how my Turkish must sound to them. Speaking of discipleship, we had a record number of visitors to our Sunday services in November—then winter hit. People here hate the cold, and our numbers have reflected that fact. When asking a convert if we would see him this Sunday, he answered in English, "Sometimes I come every time."

One of our supporting pastors visited recently, along with his assistant. They could both attest that we witness openly and unashamedly. That said, much of our soul winning takes place in our own home. A couple I mentioned in my last newsletter was in our home recently, and we were able to witness to them. I expect to see at least one of them tomorrow. My CPA and his wife have been frequent guests. At Christmas they brought her mother over, and this week they are bringing his parents. Pray for a young man to whom one of my sons has been witnessing. Pray for a physicist I met yesterday who wants to get together with me. Pray for those taking language classes in our school. Pray for many acquaintances who bring laughter into our lives, but whose likely eternal destiny still causes us to weep.

Leading a team has brought laughter and tears. Many who planned to serve with us have chosen another course. Many others are preparing to come. In fact, we have hosted several potential team members in recent weeks and have more visiting in April. We weep at how long it is taking us to lay the groundwork and acquire the language skills we need. At the same time, we rejoice over God's bountiful goodness to us and the many miracles He has already bestowed to assure us of His involvement in our lives. We are working every day to accomplish His purpose. We thank all of you who patiently and faithfully support that work.

In closing, I wept recently when I inadvertently managed to lose hundreds of hours of work when an external hard drive crashed. Please pray with me that the data can be recovered. If it proves absolutely impossible to recover the data, I laugh to think of the job I'll almost certainly have offered me from Hillary's administration!

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