

Hello one last time from the States. We are leaving tomorrow back for Zambia but wanted to write once more to you, our support team. We have seen God at work in our lives in the last month and there is much to be thankful for and to communicate.

As we enter yet another time of transition for our family it is always good to pause, reflect and consider ways we can function in a more God-honoring way. Our pause came at a week of debrief and renewal in the mountains of Colorado. There, with other missionaries and MTI (Missionary Training International) staff, we were able to unload our burdens and let others pour into us. We arrived feeling spent and weary but left encouraged and understood. Following is an excerpt of a few of Tim's reflections since our time in Colorado:

▶ "We know now that we should have pulled away and received renewed strength and vision. Having regular times of enjoying the Lord and digging deeper into intimacy with Him without having to tackle the nuts and bolts of ministry should have been a reality. But we didn't make it a priority. So, as Andrea and I return to Zambia we are returning as "works in progress" especially in the area of allowing time for ourselves to be renewed day by day. We believe it's possible to thrive on the mission field...not simply survive. Looking at our ministry lives at a removed distance has helped impress upon us that walking with God is the secret to the strong, healthy and fruitful lives that God wants us to lead. It's ironic though, that while it's easy to acknowledge this it's downright painful to put into practice. Our outward life of ministry hasn't felt right because we were regularly neglecting the Source that sustains that. Our future life and ministry must be built on the strength of character we forge by His grace and through our fellowship with Him and others."

We share this window into our lives exposing our weakness so that you will pray for us. There is nothing more destructive to team, our work and our personal lives than trying to do it in our own strength. Please pray that grace would abound in our lives, flowing into us and out through us to all that we encounter.

In spite of our failures, God is faithful and good. He has opened doors wide open for our return to Zambia...making the impossible happen. Our support is back up to 100%, Ireen received citizenship and her passport in record time, our tickets were changed without penalty, Andrea's lost passport turned up right where it was supposed to be, and we've been able to spend quality time with family and friends.

Another praise item: Last night Ian walked in front of Ireen while she was swinging on a metal horse swing. The impact was loud and hard knocking Ian to the ground. The worst ran through our minds in that split second. After consoling him for less than a minute he stopped crying and wanted to play again. We watched in disbelief as he suffered no apparent injury. Later we noticed a goose egg on his head and a few scratches on his arm, but otherwise he's back to normal.

Please also pray for us as we travel. The trip is grueling with young ones. In all, it's about two days trying to eat, sleep and play confined to airplane seats, airports or cars. Ian has been on a hunger strike for a few days which adds stress to an already difficult environment for the children. Pray also for those we leave behind. Grandparents, Great-grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins all realize it may be years before we're reunited. In a close knit family this is a hard reality. As you think of us, these prayer items are weighing on our hearts. ■

thank you to Benjamin Hilty for taking the pictures below and allowing us to use them



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