



21 May, 2009

Hey Hey,

For me one of the greatest joys in being a Christian is having the ability to look at life and see the sovereign hand of our creator and sustainer active in my life. This ability that we have of recognizing the work of God helps us in life press on through whatever situation we may encounter; and for me currently it is the news that I received about a week ago that my mother has cancer and the doctors state that she has anywhere from two weeks to two years.

Last year as I was writing my ministry goals and objectives for my mission I wrote a proposal that was to expand the ministry that I was doing here in the location where I live. This expanded proposal included an expanded budget that I would need to raise. Trusting in the ability of God to raise the funds if I work at it the proposal was submitted and approved. The idea was to return to the States early this year and work at raising about 50% of the required budget for ministry, then return here to the Philippines and start the expansion, and then after several years re-return to the States to work at obtaining 100% of the budget.

Then the economy went south last fall which affected many missionaries and mission organizations including myself. As I knew that I would be separated from my family for the most part while I would be in the States and as I am watching my daughter grow I counted the cost realizing that with a weak economy I would likely need to invest more time Stateside to reach my goal of 50%. It was not a cost that I wanted to pay and so I decided to post-pone my furlough a year (which was not an easy decision as my monthly support numbers continued to drop to the lowest levels that I have ever experienced) and remain here to slug out the poor economic times.

But with the decision to remain and the low support I knew that it would be difficult to continue with ministry, especially in view of the fact that I already moved away from the church planting that I was doing for several years prior and the current ministry (KingdomLife Batangas) required funds. This was demonstrated by the fact that the Feeding Programs and Evangelistic Christmas parties that we conducted last Christmas were funded by my wife. Therefore I realized that I needed to ask my leadership for some advice. It was then that I was informed of the church planting and street level Sunday School outreaches taking place somewhat near where I live (it takes just over two hours to get there and I need to take three different forms of transportation but the cost is only about three bucks one-way). I went and visited the ministry during the month of March and then met with my Field

Director and we realized that this was a good fit for me. The work aligns with both my vision and strengths and it was currently ongoing and they had the need for help (they approached our mission asking for help). Plus with this ministry was the added benefit of not needing to raise ministry funds as the ministry is taking place under the leadership of a well supported local church. Now all I need to worry about is my personal support for living expenses. As I thought it over I realized that I could wait until next year and press on with the lower support levels, though it would put some strain on Gloria which is something that I do not want. Yet with either my being gone for a long duration of time or the additional financial burden Gloria would need to bear either way she will be strained.

Now a new factor equates into the picture; my mom is approaching her passing from this life to the next. She is a Christian and so that is not an issue but I do want to have the chance to say “until we meet again.” Therefore all things considered I have decided to furlough sooner rather than later. I will be flying back in early June and will be bouncing back and forth between Northwest Arkansas and Central Arkansas for the next six months. I hope to see many of you and be able to shake your hands and what not. I will also be working on raising my support levels back to the levels they were several years ago.

I do know and trust that our Lord is in control. I made my plans trying to be a steward of time, treasure, and talent and trying not to be weak in faith but it is our Lord and God who guides the steps. Praise God. I hate to be going back to say good-bye to my mom but nevertheless it is inevitable. Also I am going back at a time when the economy is down but if God can feed Israel for forty years in the desert surely He can provide for my petty little needs. Ministry wise the timing is perfect as the work that I joined is just now starting to move in the direction that I find exciting and there will be a greater need for help in six months; a need that will be there for years to come.

Once again our God has proven that His sovereignty is to be trusted. He has never let me down and I am fully confident that He never will. To God be the Glory.

Jim Craig
Until He Comes

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If you would like to give you can make checks payable to Action International Ministries, P. O. Box 398 Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043-0398 or 3015 A 21st Street NE, Calgary, Alberta T2E 7T1, Canada. Note that your check is for support of the Craig's.