

Leaving This Fall | Sept 2014



by **David** on September 8, 2014 in **By David, By Rachel, France**

Rachel and I went for a hike in the Catskills last week and, in addition to the wilderness solitude, we got to enjoy the first fall leaves of the coming season. Fall signifies a change in season and this fall in particular marks a significant change in our lives. While it is true that, as Christians, we are all called to be “on mission” wherever God leads us (in our neighborhood, at school, at work, in our social circles), Rachel and I are about to step out in faith and make cross cultural missions the full-time activity and preoccupation of our lives. If you’ve been following our blog over the past few years you already know much of what is going on. If not, check out: <http://www.learnserveandlove.com/its-getting-real/> Rachel and I have both been very busy this summer attending & leading Bible studies, prayer meetings, counseling and teaching at summer camps and most recently visiting local churches and camps and sharing a little about what God has been doing in our lives and how He has led us to France. Everywhere we visit, we have thoroughly enjoyed our time reconnecting with past acquaintances and making new friends. Everyone has been very hospitable and encouraging and we will definitely miss all of you!

With the help of both of our families we successfully moved out of our apartment in Reading last week and are currently living with Rachel’s parents in Morgantown. We sold most of the larger items (refrigerator, washer/dryer, couches) and a few other smaller things. The remainder will be sorted and put in storage in Rachel’s parents’ barn.

Lord willing, we will fly out of Philadelphia on September 22nd and arrive in Paris on September 23rd. We have a car rental for the first week to get us and our luggage to Grenoble and then to help with getting settled in the apartment at the FEU house. Because of the generosity of other missionaries in Grenoble we already have much of the furniture and appliances we need there and really only need to bring some clothes and a few other items. We will be spending much of the entire first year studying French and the immersion classes start almost immediately upon our arrival.

Over the past few months of preparation we have seen God faithfully lead and provide for our every need countless times. It's pretty unreal when we look back at how smoothly everything has gone and it's an encouraging confirmation that God is going before us in all of this. We just need to keep following. This is not to say that everything has been perfectly easy, but each time something doesn't go "according to plan" we've seen God come through in ways that were much better than we could have ever thought possible.

To keep this short, I will give just one example of how God took care of something for us in a totally unexpected way: Both of our cars were victims of a freak hail storm that ripped through the Reading area this past May. We drive modest and efficient cars and do our best to take very good care of them, so we were initially bummed out about the damage from the golf ball size hail. We weren't sure what the insurance company was going to do but we were hoping that they would cover the repairs so that we would be able to sell both of our cars in their best possible condition right before we leave. The adjuster inspected both cars and, to our great disappointment, declared them a total loss since the necessary repairs exceeded the value. We had a few options: 1) Surrender both cars and take the money but then we wouldn't have transportation for the busy summer. 2) Keep the cars (with salvage titles) and take less money which wouldn't cover the repairs and would make it very difficult to sell them before we leave. 3) Do nothing, receive no insurance money and continue driving clean title and functional but not pretty cars. We prayed about it but didn't have peace about any of the options right away. A few weeks later we discovered that the one car was showing signs of some immediately needed and very expensive mechanical repairs. We quickly realized that God knew what was about to happen to that car and provided a way for us to "cash

out” in a way that was very easy in the midst of all the other transition craziness that was going on. We surrendered that car, kept the other one (option 2) and used some of the insurance money to do only the repairs that were necessary to keep it road legal for all of the travelling we needed to do this summer. We probably won’t be able to sell it later but it will be a good car to drive around when we come back for a few weeks next summer to be involved with camp. For now, we get to drive around a salvage title dented car that is a testament to our God who provides in ways that only He gets glory from. Isn’t He AWESome?!

We have just two weeks remaining to finish getting things put away and packed up before we head out. We have a lot of difficult “goodbyes” to say but we know that we will be able to stay in touch from where we will be. We hope to be able to see many of you again before we leave but if we don’t get a chance, thank you all for your support, prayers and encouragement so far . . . please keep it up!

As we get ready to go, you can pray specifically for:

- final preparations (packing up, saying goodbye)
- safety in travel
- getting settled
- success in language study
- that Christ would be formed in us
- that hearts would be turned towards God

co-laboring with you in His service,

David & Rachel

<http://www.learnservlove.com/>

<http://www.cmml.us/missionaries/m1985>

One last thing: You may have noticed something missing from the above post. It was and will continue to be very intentional in all of our correspondence. I am ONLY mentioning it now because many people have asked us: “How is support raising going?” and I wanted to address it in a straightforward way up front. If you have asked us directly you may have gotten an answer similar to this: All of the support we will ever need (as well as for every other missionary ever) has

already been raised. God already has everything He needs to get His work done in the world. We are going out in faith not knowing when or how much God will provide for us but absolutely knowing that our God is faithful and will provide all that we need exactly when we need it. We trust that God alone will work perfectly in the hearts, minds and hands of His children to let go of His resources for the sake of the expansion of His kingdom through the good news of life in Jesus Christ. God will provide for us as long as He wants to use us in that mission and we have already experienced the faithfulness of our God in this area many times in the past. We could not do any of this without your support, prayers and encouragement and you already know that we absolutely need all of it. We have humbled ourselves before our God (the source of all of “our” resources) as He has lead us to approach support in this way. We would rather encourage you to ask God how you can get involved in His mission in the world. Keith Green had something similar to say:

“This generation of believers that you and me are a part of, we are responsible for this generation of souls all over the world. We’re responsible for them. We’re responsible to pray daily for the needs of ministries around the world and ask God: “How about me not sending my money this time. How about me going?” It’s so easy to write a check. It’s so easy. But God can’t cash out of state checks in Heaven. He needs you! Open your eyes to the world all around you.”

If, however, you clearly feel led by God to support us financially at any time, there is a really easy way to do so through our missions support organization, Christian Missions in Many Lands (see above link). 100% of the money designated for any missionary through CMML goes to the missionary. CMML is a faith based ministry as well and God has faithfully provided for them for nearly 100 years. Isn’t our God AWESome?!