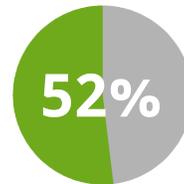


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Times of Transition



ALISE & MARK JUANES



SUPPORT PLEDGED



THAILAND

*...but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.*

-Isaiah 40:31

I'm not the type of man to switch employers very easily. Since I graduated from college almost 25 years ago, I have had only three employers; each time I changed employers it was a change of careers and a change in the seasons of my life. Today I once again find myself in a time of transition from one career to the next, from one season to the next, and I wanted to share a few of my thoughts with you.

When I graduated from college as a 20 year old man, I found my first job. I was hired as a supervisor for a trucking company where God gave me the gift of confidence in Him and who He made me to be. It was an important step in my own personal and spiritual growth. In my early 30's I became a husband and a father so I changed careers and spent the next ten years in global transportation management. When I left that job, I had received a lesson in work-life balance. In my 40's I changed careers yet again, this time I was blessed to receive a position at a church. For the past 6 and a half years I have been working at Crosswalk Community Church as the Pastor of Administration. Now, however, I once again find myself in a time of transition because I have left that position so we can further prepare for global service.

What has God revealed to me during my time employed at a church? I have learned the value of taking care of myself. In my previous employment, work would burn me out; I would go on a vacation to escape work, relax, and then go back to my burnt out job with no real change. Repeat cycle. Working at Crosswalk, however, I learned the value of space and boundaries. I realized that some of my desire to work hard stemmed from my own anxiety to simply be still – and that there is great value in stillness. God taught me a lesson on renewal through self-care: spiritually, physically, and emotionally. For me, vacations are no longer about escape from work life but rather about family bonding and shared experience. The rest is incorporated as a part of the daily rhythm of life.

Taking a little time to contemplate the season of the last six years of my life is an important step in my ongoing growth. It's not just about thinking back on that season, it is praying to God to show me what is important and what to take away. I am still learning how to incorporate rest and renewal into my normal daily routine, but simply recognizing the value of self-care is a new concept to my old work-work-work lifestyle. But taking the lessons of the past is important while looking to the future – and that is really what the goal is. These past few weeks Alise and I have taken some “transition time” to pray and plan for what comes next in our lives.

So where does that leave us for the future? What is the next step?

Our relationship with International Ministries (IM) is now at the “appointment” stage – meaning that our primary focus is to prepare for global service in Thailand through personal training and growing partnerships with churches and individuals. We currently stand at 52% of our pledged monthly support (which increases with ongoing support, whether that be monthly, quarterly, or annually) – our goal is to reach 100% by this September. It has been such a fun adventure and an encouragement this past year to meet with so many people who love the Lord and have a heart for His people and we look forward to more of the same this year. Additionally, we have some training: a 4 week long language and culture acquisition training for the whole family in Colorado this April as well as ongoing training in Spiritual Direction. Currently our whole family is working on getting into a rhythm of homeschool, ministry, partnership building, and connecting with God. This is also our biggest personal prayer request right now, that our time of transition these next few months can be fruitful.

Thank you all so much for your prayers, love, and support. We would love to hear from you as well, in your times of transition where do you seek God?

Love & Shalom,

Mark



At the beginning of the year, we had a wedding to attend in Southern California so we decided to take a few extra days of family time. One of the activities we took in was to visit Medieval Times, a jousting show and restaurant. All of the kids loved it, but Kolin especially had a great time. He thought the horses were cool but it was the jousting show which got him screaming and cheering. For the following two weeks he has been running around the house with sticks, swords, and light sabers - anything that resembles a lance, and trying to engage people in a joust. That is an insight into Kolin, our boy who looks forward to riding a motorcycle and seeing a tiger when we go to Thailand. And when asked what he will do if he sees a snake in Thailand he replied... "I'm gonna smack it, I'm a man!" (p.s. the correct answer was leave it alone and find mommy and daddy...)



←
Actually a flag,
now it's a
SWORD