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Transitions and Trapeze Artists



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SUPPORT PLEDGED



MEXICO

“But Jesus was matter-of-fact: Yes—and if you embrace this kingdom life and don’t doubt God, you’ll not only do minor feats like I did to the fig tree, but also triumph over huge obstacles...” ~ Matthew 21:21 (*The Message*)

Several days ago, as we prepare to end a long day in our home, I (Denise) encouraged Juancito to take a bath. His reply was, “No, I don’t want to.” But I managed to get him to the shower. I thought it was a good moment for a gratefulness lesson, so I asked, “Do you want a cold or warm shower.” He looked at me puzzled and said, “A warm shower.” I added, “You should hurry and get your warm shower now. We don’t know if we’ll have warm or cold showers in Chiapas.” He hurried to take his shower, but I had stroked a nerve.

Earlier I noticed the skin on his hands was very dry, so I reminded him to put lotion on after his shower. Suddenly, he started to cry and said, “Mommy, why do I have to have dry skin? I don’t want dry skin.” I replied, “It’s okay it will get better with lotion.” But I knew something else was wrong. Usually, he doesn’t cry over things like that. So, I asked him, “What’s the matter? Are you sad about something else?” His answer caught me off guard. “Yes, I don’t want to go to Chiapas,” he said. “I’m going to miss all my friends from church and school. I’m going to miss my teacher, my room and my toys.”

As I reflect on that incident many things go through my mind. As a parent, what was I supposed to do? How do I avoid crying with my child? Do I tell him that I’m also thinking about the moment when we must say goodbye to everyone we have known and come to love in West Virginia?

This episode surfaced some of the tensions we’re experiencing as our family goes through this transition period. The transition began the moment we responded to God’s call to Chiapas. The full process involves: building our support network (fund-raising), training, packing, storing, selling, and goodbyes. And it will continue as we settle in a new country and start to unlearn and relearn, understand the local culture, adapt to a new way and rhythm of life, and build new relationships with our partners and in the community.

At times, it feels as if we were like daring trapeze artists defying the law of gravity as we let go of what’s “known and certain” and stretch our arms to reach for a new call, a new future.

Most likely this won’t be the last time Juancito says that. We know how resilient and adaptable children are, but we also don’t want to disregard the fact that our children will also be experiencing this transition in their own ways. So, once again I ask for your prayers. Please pray for the kiddos and for us the parents. Please, pray that we have the wisdom to know how to talk to our children and how to express how we feel. Pray that we know how to grieve and be sensitive to the needs of our children and the community we currently serve.

We reminded him that we would still be able to talk to our friends and family through technology just like we talk to abuelita Ulda and abuelita Ivania (their grandmothers) in Nicaragua. We told him that his best friend, Henry, could visit us during summer. We also told him that we should pray for a friend he could play soccer with, a friend he could go swimming with, a friend at each one of the churches, great friends and teachers at school and that whenever he felt sad or worried about Chiapas, he should just talk with his best friend Jesus.

Thank you for your love, prayers and support!

With gratitude

