



Brown

FAMILY MISSION

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Friends and supporters,

Since our incident in October, our lives have not only been exponentially more chaotic than normal (is that even possible?), but we have ventured into territory that is completely foreign to us in a different way. We have been spending a lot of time in the world of psychologists and learning about trauma and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). And in case you don't know about it, it is not a fun place to be.

Prior to our arrival at the counseling program with Alongside, Tammi and I had committed to not make any decisions about what the future might hold for our family and ministry work. Without having a firm grounding on where our family was mentally and physically, we felt it would be unwise to anticipate our next steps. So even now, we are just beginning to formulate a course moving forward.

Our primary focus is on the health and well being of our marriage and that our children. The report that Tammi and I received was encouraging and we were basically told we were fairly stress hardy and could return to life as usual in Haiti. However, our oldest children, Emily and Elliott, are still suffering from PSTD and it was suggested that we continue with their counseling for an additional 2-3 months. It was further suggested by our counselors that we take up to a year before even considering moving back to Haiti with our children. And we were further cautioned that since the "rules of engagement" on the ground in Jacmel (and Haiti) had changed dramatically because of what we experienced, we must be certain of and committed to our calling. And while we are certain that God has called us to serve in missions, it would not be wise to place our family at risk. There is a lot of grace, discernment, and counsel wrapped up in our decision- but the bottom line is that we will not be returning to live in Haiti.

So now what? I have communicated our intentions to the Haitian Support Ministry board and things are beginning to move rather quickly again. The lease on our house in Jacmel is over at the end of February, so I (Jeff) am heading down to close our our house beginning on Tuesday, February 14. Yeah, that's fast! I will meet up after a few days with a short term medical group that HSM is sending and will return with them on February 24. Going forward I will continue to lead and assist the short term groups and travel to Jacmel as required by HSM. This will leave our family stateside long enough for the kids to complete their counseling (2-3 months) and allow me the flexibility to still travel and assist HSM short term groups for the next 6-9 months. During this time also, we will be seeking out and praying about where the Lord may have us longer term. It seems to us that we are again at square one, in fact, we very seldom ever seem to leave this square in our own minds. But we are confident that God has us right where we need to be. Throughout all that we have gone through and at various times along the path upon which He has placed us while serving, we continue to be strengthened, equipped, and refined even as we are continuously broken. That sentence doesn't seem to make a lot of sense on the face of it- even as I type it. And that's OK. I don't claim to understand how or why God works the way He does. We are called to serve and that is what we love to do.

Thanks to all of you who have given us this time to begin sorting things out and healing. Your outpouring of love, encouragement, and support has been overwhelming. Your prayers have been medicine to our souls. We are truly not worthy of it but we are so grateful for it. We give God all the glory and thanks for each of you and for His great mercy.

In His strength and always for Him,

Jeff and Tammi
Emily, Elliott, Edison, and Evangeline