

October 23, 2011

Reflecting on the Time in Canada (January to August 2011)

Dear friends,

Back in Taiwan with my family. Reflecting on the time in Canada, these 8 months did not pass according to my plan. Rather just “as the sky soars high above earth, so the way God works surpasses the way I work, and the way God thinks is beyond the way I think.” (Is 55:9) While I expected to spend considerable time “deep in the Word”, and involved in various ministry activities, God had other plans. Rather the time was very relaxing with me gaining encouragement from 1<sup>st</sup> John. Now, in contrast to the end of 2010, when I was feeling burned out, in this return to Taiwan I feel rejuvenated and desirous to serve our Savior in ministry. How did God accomplish this rejuvenation? What am I continuing to pray about?

### 1. Praise

- Great time with my children, playing together, taking them swimming, and enjoying their company. This was relaxing and a source of great enjoyment to me. I think this time is irreplaceable -- I will cherish these memories much more than I would publishing an additional scientific paper or making an additional few thousand dollars. Thank you LORD, Is 55:9 is true.
- Family devotions. Since Aien was a baby, I have tried to spend time at bed time end reading a Bible story (generally from Arch books), singing a few choruses, talking about the day and praying together. Each child has a song “Jesus Loves Aien”, “God made Johann”, “God is so good to Lien”, “Shang Di de Liang En bu hui tingzhe” Recently, Aien has not wanted to join us, feeling the time was only for the little children. My heart was really encouraged to have all 4 children together for Bible Story, Singing and Prayer with Ruth (the youngest) clapping to "Jesus Loves Me". Friday July 8th was the first time that all 4 children participate with such joy!
- Sharon (my wife) enjoyed her time in Canada (in contrast to her expectations and fears). People were fond of Xiuman. She led two ethnic Chinese ladies (Amy and Li-Wei) in a weekly Bible study.

### 2. Teaching Received

- I expected that God would have many things for me “to do” in terms of service. In contrast, God just wanted me to be quiet and listen. In fact, he showed me my own pride when I reflected on the hurt I felt when I offered to serve and was told: “We don't need you.”
- God used teaching received from a variety of brothers and sisters with various ministry styles to encourage and strengthen my faith. I enjoyed attending a number of services at different churches:
- *Wentworth Baptist Church* (Sunday AM): Teaching from Pastor Robin Ellis and a variety of brothers and sisters. (Robin took 3 months Sabbatical to refresh and the church did not collapse). In my initial meeting with the Pastor I asked, “How should I serve in the church?”. His response: “Pray and when God tells you what to do, we will support you.”
- *Ridgecrest Baptist Church* (Sunday PM): The teaching of Pastor Tim using modern day parables helped bring the Bible alive. Aien insisted on attending church on Sunday evenings to hear the latest events in the life of Rembrandt and the other employees of a mythical coffee shop. Praise God.
- *Daily Christian Fellowship* (6 days/week at 7AM): The spirit of the leaders, Gee (“God has anointed me to this ministry and I will be faithful to this call”) with his strong love and Gord (almost blind) with his more gentler approach, as well as the faithfulness of the members gave me great joy. I attended as much as possible.
- *Church of God of Prophecy*. Wednesday evenings I sat under the teaching of Bishop Manning as the only non- Jamaican.. His gentle and soft spirit was a great encouragement to me.
- *Harvest Bible Chapel* Although I did not attend regularly, it was encouraging to see what God was doing there -- even as their senior pastor also took a Sabbatical rest!
- This break allowed me to step back and get perspective: My research in Taiwan is really not that important of itself. Neither are most of the '[Daisy Chains](#)' that my colleagues and I make....

### **3. Prayer Items**

–*for Sharon*, my wife. I pray that she will become interested and supportive of family devotions. In Canada, I was saddened that she did not desire to join a small group or attend more than a Sunday morning service. Initial thanksgiving in regard to this is that back in Taiwan she is trying to attend a small group at the church we attend as well as our faculty and staff prayer meeting at YZU.

–*For the Wever Community Hub*: While in Canada, the only thing God impressed on me to do was to seek to organize prayer (across the churches) for our community. I was slow in doing this and we only met twice. The first time Ruth fell 150cm onto a block of concrete (Praise God, no miraculously no injuries but an investigation by the Children's Aid Society) and a Website I setup introduce the prayer idea broke down. The 2<sup>nd</sup> time: the Website went down again, in driving to the meeting the warning lights came on in my mothers car(1<sup>st</sup> time ever) and the pastor of the church who hosted the meeting came under intense spiritual attack. Since Satan is working in this area, I believe that God is about to move. (It seems to me if nothing is happening then Satan would not trouble himself with this area.) I am praying for future meetings.

### **4. A Final Confirmation of the time of rest...**

Just before heading back to Taiwan, Bishop Manning gave me an article: “Why we don't Sabbatical Rest? We don't consider this ordinance of God because:

- I am indispensable to God's work. (Pride?)
- I need more money. (Greed?)
- I need the money, my family will starve. (No Faith? - I trust God for eternity but not for today.)
- I have forgotten how to rest.

Jan Couch writes: "As a business owner, I worked to maximize everything. A lot of times I thought: 'Lord, you could have began your public ministry earlier--at age 24 or 25 instead of at age 30 and healed thousands more.' God, first of all, followed the Levitical Law, but He also does not rush, hurry or try to overload every moment."

May God Bless and Keep you,

Jonathon White

### **5. Two verses that I am trying to apply**

Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; (1 Samuel 12:23)

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

### **Websites etc**

Some Previous Letters: <http://whitejd.xiaotu.com/per/index.htm>