

JOE'S NEWSLETTER

March 2010



Whatever enlarges hope will also exalt courage Samuel Johnson

A new year has begun and, because of the whirlwind of new hopes God has filled me with, I find myself seeking and wondering and waiting. I've found that patience is much easier when life is full of distractions, a luxury I would gladly welcome right now. God has been speaking to me of major changes and a new season coming for more than a year now. Once again he has built up my hope and anticipation with exciting hints and glimpses, yet no tangible real-life evidence of change. Assuming that this is no accident, I now I find myself desperately seeking his purpose and trying not to miss anything during this time of waiting. When I was a much younger man, someone once told me that the translation of

the word "wait" in scripture does not mean to sit and do nothing, but rather to wait in service, much like a waiter at a restaurant. Looking back I can see how I've lived believing this to be true. I've found, however that every time of waiting I've endured has looked radically different. So right now I'm having to refocus from the exciting big picture to the "taking orders" and "serving customers," and hoping they leave a good tip. One prophetic word that was given to me indicated a new season of harvesting from seeds that have been sown. A wise friend recently reminded me that harvesting is hard work, requiring endurance, patience, and perseverance. While I know that to be true, I've admittedly been more interested in the fruit itself.

It is easier to build a boy than to mend a man

At Agape Home I've been extra busy doing computer work, with numerous crises to solve as well as setting up new machines for our oldest children in our village homes.

Its been dramatically different at our main facility, having all the older children gone. I find myself missing them often, wondering how they're doing. At the same time I'm treasuring the opportunity to spend quality one-on-one time with the middle group since they left. Its given me a new joy in my time with them. We have long suffered a shortage of caregivers for the older children, which resulted in a constant competition for my attention and affection. The change has brought about such a peaceful and relaxed atmosphere and I'm truly grateful.

We have also been blessed with the addition of a new baby girl to our community. We recently had taken in a young pregnant teenage girl to our Mother and Baby unit. She came to us from the government orphanage with an all too familiar sad story. One of the main shortcomings of the government home is

Let the land sprout with vegetation— every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came

Genesis 1:11

a cultural one, in which people have value based on status and attachment is discouraged. She's the youngest mother we've ever taken in and in many ways is like taking in two children. My hope for her while she is with us is that she would come to know what love truly means, as so many girls like her end up in a cycle of repeating the same destructive behavior in looking for it.

Finally, as I enter into this new year a bit anxious and uneasy about the unknown ahead, I want to extend gratitude to all of you again for continuing to believe in God's call for me and for caring for me so far beyond what I could expect or hope for. Thank you and bless you.

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