

Is It Really Worth It?

The bible is filled with scriptures about counting the cost, about putting hand to the plow and not looking back; about leaving mother and father, giving everything up and counting it loss so that we can gain Christ; about denying ourselves, dying to self and living for Him. All throughout the Gospels and Epistles – yes, at every turn we are called to count the cost... and follow Him.

These are easy words to read, but hard lessons to live.... never harder to live than in the moments of crisis: those tipping points that threaten to overwhelm and consume the emotions of the heart and redirect the course of one's life; those life changing moments when the soul searches deep, seeking the stable anchor of God's Will, Plan and Purpose.

It is in these gut wrenching moments when the soul stretching and faith fortification takes place. Strangely for me, the precursor to this is found only when the dormant question finds voice and utters the unmentionable - "Is it really worth it?" Is it really worth the cost of suffering, of being so far away from loved ones in times of crisis, of giving up what we could have for the sake of another?"

Too easily I say "yes it's worth it", but then have to live it... which is not so easy. Struggling with these issues recently and trying to make sense of where the Lord has us at this moment; wrestling with the challenge to be faithful to the Lord's calling here in Austria while longing to be with family who are dealing with health issues, has challenged me profoundly. It was while facing this challenge that I heard the Lord speak through Daniel (as is often the case when I stop long enough to listen!) in a deep and profound way. Daniel very simply and wisely pointed out that we have the comfort of knowing our parent's and all of our family members' destiny. That is a contrast to many of our non-believing friends here in Austria, who simply do not share our destiny, or to our believing friends who lack the comfort of knowing their children's' or husband's destinies. Could we really turn our backs on them and walk away?

Honestly, I still wrestle with these questions. I know the right answer; I know what any good missionary should profess... I've had good days and not so good days and still do. But I began asking the Lord to show me if in fact we are making a difference, if it is worth not being with family during times of challenge and crisis. And in His bountiful mercy He did show me! And here are just a few ways He allowed me (us) the privilege to serve Him.

- Several months ago, I gave my German teacher a copy of the book, "The Artist's Way," praying that the Holy Spirit would use this book to reach her very creative, zany, new-age heart. We had several interesting conversations in the weeks that followed, but due to busyness of life our conversations became fewer and fewer. To my surprise this past Monday as I walked into class, she threw her arms around me and thanked me for the greatest gift she has ever received. She recounted how through this book she realized that she had somehow lost her way and turned her back on God. She went on to

witness to one of the Turkish ladies about trusting God and watching for the miracles to take place in life! I didn't get the opportunity to speak in great detail with her about her revelations, but I trust the Lord will carve out some time for us in the weeks ahead! Please pray for both Dagmar and her daughter Hannah who have been deeply touched and appear to be on a journey of true enlightenment!

- Many of you have been praying for my friend Evelyn, who is married to a Muslim. Your prayers are being answered...a few months ago, her daughter, Josephine, professed a faith in Jesus and now Galap, her son, is asking questions about Jesus and Evelyn's faith. Galap has recently been severely traumatized by the wake and funeral of his Muslim grandfather. Since this time he has been suffering from panic attacks and crying out for help. He recently told his mom he didn't know who to look to Allah or Jesus. Evelyn, through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit told him to pray to God and ask him to reveal himself to him. So we have been praying, asking the Lord to reveal himself in dreams, or visions...whatever it took for him to see the light. For the past two weeks, he has shared with his mom that he sees this light before his eyes as if he is dreaming...sometimes it happens as he awakes! Please pray that the Lord of Heaven and Earth reveal himself to this 14 year old and that salvation would come to this young man! Tayyer, her husband, remains opposed to Christ and is very aggressive towards anything to do with Evelyn's beliefs. However, by the grace of God, he has no problem with her coming to me for bible study! The Holy Spirit is at work within this family and we praise God for what he is doing!
- The Gemeinde too is bearing fruit - last week, both Lisa and Claudia brought friends with them to church who they have been witnessing to on a regular basis! We are seeing more and more of the Holy Spirit's outpouring on our little group and they have since been asking for more! We are seeing the fruits and the gifts of the Spirit welcomed and come to life in ways that have not been welcomed before. God is tearing down the walls of expectations and His Spirit is moving among us!

How gracious, how loving, how kind our Heavenly Father is to us - now I am not arrogant enough to think that any of this is because of me (us) - the Lord would get the job done without us, but what a privilege to be used by Him, even in small ways, to bring Himself Glory!

Now, the burning question still remains: "Is it really worth it? " Would it be worth it even if the Lord in His gracious nature had not shown any glimpses of what He is doing? And the answer is....

Always - He is always worth it... even in the darkest moments, through life's toughest times, when nothing and no-one can make sense of what is happening, when rhyme and reason are defunct and logic has long gone - **He** is worth it! There is nothing that can compare to Him, to His Plan, His Purpose for our lives - for it is in Him that we find our being! (I'm having a good day!) :)

We Give Him All the Glory!-For His Fame Among the Nations!-Kathleen, Daniel & Ava Harrison

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