
The Vow

August 24, 2009

I am now a member of the Blender Community.

Perhaps I should explain. Perhaps the most important development to happen in my life in the last year was hearing from the Lord that I should make breakfast in the morning. Nancy has a first period class; I didn't have to get out until second period. It would take pressure off of her and allow me to develop gifts previously undeveloped.

To add to this, Nancy has been diagnosed as a diabetic. It was caught early, and so far diet has controlled it quite well. But making a nutritious breakfast became more important. Smoothies became a regular part of the morning. And then our blender died.

It isn't easy to buy a blender in Kenya, so I set out to do research on blenders. And I discovered the Blender Community. Blender people have OPINIONS, and they are not shy about expressing them. To add to the fun, it is not important just to be right, but also to prove that the other person is WRONG. I promise you, you don't want to be on the wrong side of the glass vs. plastic debate; it got ugly over there.

After reading more than I ever believed was possible to read about blenders, we bought one and have been very happy with it. So happy that as I tried to zip up a piece of luggage whose zipper had fallen off, I had the thought that I might actually join the Luggage Community.

I will give warning if I do. Too many exciting things are probably bad for your health.



You enter a new family dynamic when your oldest brings home 'the girl.' JT was here this summer doing an internship in the business office and he brought his special friend, Janelle, who was also doing a project with the girls at St. Edwin's Orphanage. They met at Wake Forest, and it looks to be pretty serious. She certainly passed the family test; we all fell in love with her. Katie had the best line: 'I think JT is going out with her because she reminds him of me.'

The rains haven't come and it has gotten more desperate here. We had a meeting with all of our computer teachers, and they reported that the biggest challenge for them was to teach when students were crying because they were so hungry. The term ended with most schools running out of food 10-15 days before the end of the term; we just didn't have the money to buy enough.

I had an incident with a local school recently. There is a computer center that both the primary school and the secondary school share. They border the same land; they are

right next door. The secondary school headmaster had recently stopped his students from attending computer classes. I went to meet with him.

Me: Why can't the students take computer classes?

Headmaster: They will not be able to take a class until you provide me with a computer for my office.

Me: No.

HM: Then they will not go.

Me: Fine. I am telling you also that I will no longer provide food to your school.

HM: (With a panic in his eyes) I have changed my mind.

Me: I don't care. You will not threaten me.

HM: Brother, will you pray with me?

Me: I know what you are trying to do right now, and it is called manipulation. No, I won't pray with you.

HM: You are not a very good missionary.

Me: I will tell you how bad of a missionary I am. The next time I come to this school and you are drunk (which was almost every time I went) I am going to beat you up.

HM: You are a very bad missionary.

We worked out that I am not going to provide food for the first two weeks of school. If his students are regularly attending classes, we will add the food for them. And now, every time I go to the school, he has a student run and throw water on him.

I should add that he is in his 30's and 6'2. In my best days, many decades ago, I was a skinny wimp. Now I am a skinny wimp with a large gut, which is actually rather hard to pull off.

We are reminded often that we are guests in this country, and we need to defer. And mostly, I adhere to that.

Mostly.

During the break, a pilot and his mechanic from our mission were killed in a crash. You shouldn't be surprised when people who put their lives at risk to help the poor are



killed, but it still surprises you in how much it hurts. Each man left behind his wife and four children; it is just such a great loss.

You look to the hills when things are rough, but he directed me a little lower.

To a driver.

Joshua is an accountant who is in law school. His father runs a driving service, and you can always count on him. It isn't safe for me to drive at night because of my poor night vision, and their service is a blessing when there is a late airport pickup. Recently, I was going to fly out and I scheduled a ride. Joshua picked me up, and since we were running ahead of schedule, I asked him if he wanted to stop for dinner.

He told me the most amazing story. When he was in high school, he and four friends started to meet together and pray for Kenya. During one prayer meeting, they felt led to make a vow: they would all go to law school, they would all enter politics, and they would all work to bring justice to this land.

They are all in law school, and they still meet to pray. The odds of all of them remaining true to that vow, and for all of them to be accepted and be able to pay for law school, is beyond what I can measure.

I felt like I was hearing about something sacred and holy that is going to change this whole country.

Your pal

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