

"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." – 2 Corinthians 5:20

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## ***Still Small Voice***

It has been a strange three weeks for me since returning from Romania. It's like coming home, but being away from home at the same time. In some ways, it's nice and refreshing to be in the States, but in other ways it takes much more effort. It's harder with the kids since our routine is broken. It's difficult living from week to week and not really knowing how long we'll be waiting to know what our next step is. And perhaps greatest of all, it is difficult feeling like aimless wanderers – purposeless here. We're supposed to be in Romania, not in the States. As I was flying back from Romania in August, I was getting down about our whole situation, feeling as though I was being pulled away from what I was *supposed* to be doing. But God has been gracious to me, teaching me that my identity and purpose is not situational.

My return trip to the States was a 50+ hour journey. It took me to Italy, Iceland, Cleveland, and then Atlanta. I had four hour's worth of land travel, four plane rides, and several extended layovers. There was a large amount of time for contemplation. On my first trip, God sat me next to a Romanian who just so happened to be from Brasov. We talked for most of the trip, exchanged contact information, and are planning on meeting up when I return. But in just a two hour trip, this stranger and I talked about

*-his atheism*

*-why he is Orthodox and will have his children baptized even though he doesn't believe God exists*

*- the grounding (or lack thereof) of morality apart from God*

*- whether science is opposed to religion*

*- my reasons for belief in God*

That was pretty encouraging to me. We parted ways in Milan, and soon after exiting the plane, I came across an elderly woman yelling in the middle of the airport. She wasn't yelling in English, yet I understood what she was saying. She was yelling in Romanian and I could understand her! She was all by herself, frantically calling for help. She was late for her flight and needed to get to Bucharest. Because I had a lengthy layover, I was able to talk with her, figure out her flight, and escort her to her gate – all in Romanian. It felt great.

My next plane trip and layover in Iceland were uneventful, but my trip from Iceland to Cleveland made up for that. By this point in my trip my eyes were having difficulty focusing due to exhaustion. Nevertheless, God sat me next to a guy from the States – perhaps the only guy in the world (besides me) who would choose to spend the whole 6 hour trip of an international flight talking instead of sleeping. We talked about a lot of different things, but once he found out I was a missionary, our conversation exploded.

*-He told me about his traumatic childhood*

*-He asked why God allows evil and suffering to occur*

*-He asked why I believe in God and how I could be so sure*

*-He asked about hypocrisy in the church*

*-He told me about his DUI that left him in a coma, his marriage that failed shortly after his wife had a miscarriage, and some current legal struggles in his life.*

*-He asked me to pray for him.*

Our conversation was amazing and the way God opened up conversation between us was of great encouragement to me. We exchanged contact information after exiting the plane and have been in contact several times since. We parted ways in Cleveland, I slept for a few hours, and then made it back to Atlanta. While hunkered down here in Atlanta, I have been Skyping with an online tutor from Romania. It's been a helpful way for me to study Romanian and progress in my language ability. But more than that, it's been another way

in which God has allowed me to share the Gospel. In our week's worth of sessions so far, my tutor has brought up the following questions:

- Do you believe in destiny?*
- If you believe in God's providence (as opposed to destiny), why do bad things happen? Wouldn't those bad things be attributed to God?*
- Are people basically good?*
- Isn't ignorance the cause of most evil? If people just knew better, wouldn't they act better?*
- Why did God make some people who would be good parents barren, while giving some horrible parents children?*
- Do people deserve second chances? Where is the line - the limit of forgiveness?*
- Is it more important to fast and brag, like the strict Orthodox, or is it better to actually be a good person outside of the church and tradition?*
- Do we have to confess our sins to a priest or can we do that directly to God?*
- What do you think about other religions?*
- What do you believe is the truth about God and our purpose in life?*

In these interactions which God has brought my way, he is reminding me that his call on my life never ceases, and his ability to use me is not circumstantial or geographical. God moved Abraham from Ur to Caanan, where Abraham began the lineage which would lead to the redemption of all creation. God took Joseph to a foreign land to save his family. Daniel was pulled from Israel and served God as a Babylonian captive. And Christ left heaven to be a living sacrifice on Earth. While there is nothing more I want than for Denton to get better and for us all to quickly return to Romania - the place where I believe God has called us and continues to do so - I have needed to repent for my shortsightedness. I have not only viewed my circumstances as a hindrance to God's call on my life, but I've viewed them as a separate path which veers away from what God truly desires. Like Elijah in the wilderness, I seem to think that God is only present in particular ways and at particular times. I fail to listen for God in the still small voices - or in our case, the unplanned detours. God has been patient and gracious with me in our circumstances, as he has allowed me to meet people in need, share our struggles and story, and to have the ability to make ourselves available to individuals in need. None of these God-ordained interactions would have happened apart from our present circumstance.

I'm sure I'm not the only one who would benefit from such a lesson. Be

encouraged that wherever God has lead you, placed you, or dragged you, he is able to use you and will faithfully do so. The gospel of grace is needed at all times and in all places, so be faithful and content, Christian, as God uses you to live out and share this message wherever you are.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS...

- We aren't going back to Romania on September 4th as originally planned. Denton has improved a lot, but we still have a few questions and things to figure out. Mainly we need to give him a few more weeks through respiratory season to make sure that the new medications are going to continue being good enough for him. So we've rescheduled our tickets for September 30, and we'll continue working closely with our pediatric pulmonologist. We're praying for wisdom and discernment if we need to change that date again.
- After his surgery to remove tonsils and adenoids and put in ear tubes, Atticus is like a brand new child! It's wonderful to see how much he has improved after that surgery. Praise the Lord for this huge step!!
- Our teammates, Derek and Shannon Ebbers, have been faithful missionaries to Romania for 11 years now and are seriously the best team leaders God could have possibly provided for us! As is normal for all long-term missionaries, they have recently lost some financial supporters and are looking to make up the loss in their monthly account. Supporting our teammates is a direct way you can be in support of us; if they have to go back to the States for support-raising, that affects the team dynamic and ministry. We would love for you to consider joining our support team by literally supporting our whole team! If you would be interested in reaching out to them, supporting them, or passing their names along to individuals and churches who may have interest in what we're doing in Romania, we would greatly appreciate this. You can [find them here](#).
- If you're interested in one-time giving and would rather support projects, we have a project account for the Romanian church which goes towards things like the youth program, elder trainings, etc. The account is **#94978** for the Romania church plant.

#### PLEASE PRAY...

- Continue to pray that our church would find a Romanian pastor. Also pray for our church leadership and congregants who are facing hardship.
- Please pray that Denton's health will hold up and that we will have his issues nailed down so that we can keep our booking to return on September 30.



Driving laws changed in Romania, which required us to obtain a new Romanian driver's license. We were formerly driving on our U.S. licenses. [Read about our experience here.](#)





**Top Left:** Elin and Atticus throwing rocks in the swamp near the house in Jefferson, GA

**Top Right:** Family time with the cousins from Virginia!

**Bottom Left:** Elin dancing in between family photos. While we're in the States, we're working on updating our MTW family photo. It's a little outdated now that we have our newest addition.

**Bottom Right:** As God reminded me through my conversations that he is in all things, I was also able to see a structural reminder that he is everywhere as I explored on my Icelandic layover.

While August has been filled with travel, catching up with people, presentations, meetings, Romanian classes, etc - we've also had some time of refreshment. Catalina and I were able to go on a date, we've been able to see family, and we've just been able to breathe a little deeper as we have grandparents and a tight-knit community here who have come around us. While we're anxious to return to Romania, August was a wonderful time of refreshment for us.



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

08/24/18 - [Piercing the Darkness](#) by Derek

08/02/18 - [Courageous or Stupid](#) by Derek

07/08/18 - [Abortion and Human Rights](#) by Derek

Check us out on Facebook! We post on Catalina's "[From Dacula to Transylvania](#)" album so that you can stay up to date with us. You can also follow [our photos on instagram](#) or check out our [video archive](#). But best, of all, you should let us know if you want to join our secret Facebook Group to get more updates!



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Visit our website:

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To make a donation (Account #14088 for Derek and Catalina) or (Account #94978 Romania church plant for church projects):

<https://www.mtw.org/missionaries/details/derek-and-catalina-kreider>

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