

Letters from the Front

The Lord continues to deal graciously with the Watters!

January-February 2010

Beloved prayer partners,

Our fight of faith continues! Thank you for praying for us as we enjoyed manifold comforts and encountered various trials from the hand of our loving Father!

Last week, we received this in our inbox and were greatly strengthened by it:

Morning, February 18: "Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me." Job 10:2

Perhaps, O tried soul, the Lord is doing this to develop thy graces. There are some of thy graces which would never be discovered if it were not for thy trials. Dost thou not know that thy faith never looks so grand in summer weather as it does in winter? Love is too often like a glow-worm, showing but little light except it be in the midst of surrounding darkness. Hope itself is like a star--not to be seen in the sunshine of prosperity, and only to be discovered in the night of adversity. Afflictions are often the black foils in which God doth set the jewels of his children's graces, to make them shine the better. It was but a little while ago that on thy knees thou wast saying, Lord, I fear I have no faith: let me know that I have faith. Was not this really, though perhaps unconsciously, praying for trials?--for how canst thou know that thou hast faith until thy faith is exercised? Depend upon it, God often sends us trials that our graces may be discovered, and that we may be certified of their existence. Besides, it is not merely discovery, real growth in grace is the result of sanctified trials. God often takes away our comforts and our privileges in order to make us better Christians. He trains his soldiers, not in tents of ease and luxury, but by turning them out and using them to forced marches and hard service. He makes them ford through streams, and swim through rivers, and climb mountains, and walk many a long mile with heavy knapsacks of sorrow on their backs. Well, Christian, may not this account for the troubles through which thou art passing? Is not the Lord bringing out your graces, and making them grow? Is not this the reason why he is contending with you?



Trials make the promise sweet; Trials give new life to prayer; Trials bring me to his feet, Lay me low, and keep me there. [Charles Spurgeon, Morning and Evening: Daily Readings, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/morneve.d0218am.html>]

O how we need to develop our graces! We praise God for making His promises sweet and for bringing us to His feet these past months! May we experience true growth in grace as a result of these sanctified trials!

Leaving for Uganda on April 20 (not February 4), Lord willing

About mid-January, it became clear to us that we could not leave for Uganda on Feb. 4. After much prayerful weighing of many pros and cons, we rebooked our flight for April 20. (Praise God, our hosts Ferdie and Joanne Cabotaje are still willing to accommodate us!) The reasons?

1. We need shots for typhoid, Hepa A, Hepa B, meningococcus, pneumonia, and yellow fever. Because of Rebecca's history of allergies, our infectious disease doctor wants to make sure that the shots are spaced adequately. Our malaria prophylaxis is due to start two weeks before our departure and this also affected the timing of the other shots. A further complication in our schedule of shots arose when I was bitten by the dog of our hosts last Jan. 28. (Praise God the dog did not have rabies!) I've had an immunoglobulin shot and three anti-rabies shots; I need one more.
2. Rebecca's orthodontist has estimated that she can take off Rebecca's braces after three more adjustments which she is trying to complete by the end of March. Once the braces are taken off, Rebecca's dentist is asking for about two weeks (possibly 8 visits) to complete all the needed dental restorations.
3. Jeff Anderson, our ACTION-Philippines director, is advising us to complete all our required medical and dental work before we leave. (It is not certain whether we can get the same quality medical and dental care in Uganda.)
4. The Lord still has to bring in about 30% of our outgoing funds (unless our ACTION-Uganda director and ACTION

U.S.A. director agree to send us out with what we have).

It was difficult for us to postpone our departure because the longing to be in Uganda grows with each passing day. We do not know why the Lord has appointed these delays but we do know that He is in control of all things. What a privilege it is to trust Him through all of this!

God continues to bring in our outgoing funds!

The Lord continues to undertake for us. In November, the Lord brought in 10% more of our outgoing funds and in December-January, 25% more! We are now at 70% of our target. Soli Deo gloria! Please continue to pray with us that the Lord will graciously complete His provision for us by mid-April through brethren and churches here and in the U.S.

In our last prayer letter, we testified being humbled by the way the Lord has touched the hearts of many to give to our support and ministry. We continue to hear story after story of dear brothers and sisters giving faithfully and sacrificially. How we thank the Lord for each one of them! The words of Paul in Philippians 4:10-20 (ESV) come to mind:

"I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. ... Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received... the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen (underscoring supplied)."

To date, we have been able to present updates of our ministry to three of our four supporting churches in the Philippines. Rebecca and I spent a whole day with our brethren from Bond Servants of Love Christian Church in Paranaque City. At the morning service, we presented our Powerpoint; in the afternoon, we showed our Uganda videos and had a lively extended open forum with three Bible study groups. Lunch, merienda, and dinner were all spent with brethren including the pastor and his family and other leaders of the church. It was a great encouraging time! At Guiding Light Christian Church in Baguio City (a six-hour bus ride north of Manila), we gave a ministry update to and were prayed for by the congregation then had lunch with the workers involved in the missions arm of the church. Before heading home the following day, we had lunch at the home of the pastor and his wife—and were abundantly cheered. At our Open House in Higher Rock Christian Church in Quezon City, we reported to over 150 brethren how the Lord has been leading us concerning Uganda. We were gladdened by the presence not only of dear Higher Rock saints but of members of our ACTION family and my friends and co-workers from way back!

Our fourth supporting church, Soli Deo Gloria Christian Church of Davao City (in Mindanao), has requested us to send a video greeting and our Powerpoint in lieu of presenting to them in person. (The air fare to Davao City is quite prohibitive.) Please pray that we can get the help of some of our Higher Rock brethren to do this.

We have also met with many of our friends and supporters here--and many more meetings and visits are planned in the coming weeks! Many of our days are spent on the road, shuttling from one appointment to the next. May the Lord encourage many through our visits and presentations and raise up more brethren to partner with us in the ministry and to go out for the sake of His name among the nations!

Strengthening the Lord's people

The Lord continues to show us why we had to go to Manila before flying to Kampala. There are relationships to be strengthened, unexpected trials of faith to go through, unfinished work to be completed, fellow laborers in the vineyard to be enheartened and further equipped, unbelievers to be witnessed to, and many brethren and couples to stir up to love and good works everywhere the Lord has taken us! For instance, this week, Lord willing, we are going to meet with the Canadian-immigrant brother of Rebecca's Filipina friend who is based in the U.S. He is here on a short vacation and has said yes to our invitation to dinner. May the Lord prepare his heart for the Gospel and bring him to saving faith even as we share it.

Pray for great faith, love, humility, wisdom, courage, and perseverance as we face all that lies before us. May Jesus Christ be clearly seen and exalted in our lives at every turn!

Though outwardly we are wasting away ...

My glaucoma specialist here was very glad to see the results of the eye operation I had in Minnesota. (He introduced the Ahmed shunt to the Philippines several years ago after further studies in the U.S.) He is now trying to simplify my maintenance meds regimen in preparation for our move to Uganda.

Praise God for all the favorable results of Rebecca's medical exams! We have seen Rebecca's neurologist, ENT, gynecologist, cardiologist-internist, and ophthalmologist. All her lab work and other procedures (save one) came up clear! (Praise God, she also does not have glaucoma, a concern that was raised by her ophthalmologist in the U.S.) The only negative finding was the confirmation of her osteoporosis by her rheumatologist.

We are also asking for your prayers as her asthma and allergies, migraines, and even vertigo are all back, triggered by the

heat, pollution, fatigue, and our schedules here. We praise God for His Word that tells us:

"So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:16-18, ESV)

Uganda concerns

The Lord has been at work clarifying where He wants us to serve! In our recent email exchanges, Jerry Bingham, our ACTION-Uganda director, has been encouraging us to consider Kampala as our ministry locale given our health issues. While our calling to the Baganda people remains to be confirmed when we get to Uganda, this direction from him is an answer to prayer for us. May the Lord continue to make our paths straight!

Pray for our friend Trudy Norman who is in Uganda right now on her annual visit to her family. She is accompanied by ladies from her church (Bethlehem Baptist Church) and they will be ministering to women and children living with HIV/AIDS. Trudy has offered to: 1) negotiate for us a good long-term rate at a Christian hostel she often stays at; 2) research for us the availability of medical specialists, our maintenance meds, updated rates for rentals and utilities; and 3) line up for us a possible language/culture helper, someone who can help us purchase a reliable yet inexpensive car, and other contact persons who can help us get settled in Kampala.

Pray for us as we decide on non-suitcase options for our luggage to Uganda as Emirates is limiting us to 30 kilos per person. Pray for us also as we look for an inexpensive way to send some of our household linens and clothes to Uganda to save on our start-up costs there. We are also thinking of sending parcels to Kampala from Manila and from Minnesota to test whether care packages sent to us with medications and other health-related items will get to us safely.

Other matters

We continue to receive inquiries about how people can support us financially and where to send their support. The simplest way for all donors, *especially those outside the U.S.*, is to use a credit card and the "Donate to Mike and Rebecca" button on our web page: <http://www.actioninternational.org/watters>. Donors can also make out a check to "ACTION International Ministries," mark it "for Mike and Rebecca Watters," and mail it to any of the addresses given on page 4 of this letter. Gifts may be designated as 40026A (monthly support) or 40026B (outgoing funds). (Those who opt to give online must leave a note designating the gift as outgoing funds; otherwise it will be treated as monthly support funds.)

We would like to make sure that you are receiving our prayer letter because you are or would like to be our prayer partner and/or financial supporter. Your privacy is important to us and we do not want our letter to simply clutter up your hard drive or inbox. If for any reason you would like to unsubscribe from our mailing list, please send an email to mikeandrebecca@actionintl.org with "Unsubscribe" as the subject and we will promptly delete your name from our list, no questions asked. We would like our updates to be seen as blessings and accounts of God's faithfulness in the lives of His servants!

Summary of prayer requests:

- 1 Thank God for guiding us in setting April 20 as our new departure date for Uganda.
- 2 Praise God for bringing in about 70% of our outgoing funds! May the Lord bring in the remainder by mid-April through brethren and churches here and in the U.S.
- 3 Praise God for providing for our needs here in Manila and for our supporters who continue to give faithfully and sacrificially!
- 4 Pray that we can finish all our immunizations, that Rebecca's teeth will cooperate with her orthodontist (they are proving quite stubborn), and that her dentist will complete all the needed restorations in time.
- 5 Pray for Rebecca's health (asthma and allergies, migraines, vertigo) and that the Lord will heal her osteoporosis and strengthen her bones according to His perfect will.
- 6 Praise God for the favorable results of her other medical exams—and that the dog that bit me does not have rabies!
- 7 Pray that the Lord will encourage many through our visits and presentations, call many more to partner with us through their prayers and giving, and raise up more missionaries who will be willing to cross cultures to bring the Gospel to the lost!
- 8 Praise God for the clear leading toward Kampala (so far). May He continue to make our paths straight! Pray also for our Ugandan friend Trudy Norman who is helping us with relocation-related concerns in Kampala.

In our devotions last Feb. 3 in John 10, we were struck by the fact that in verses 11-18, Jesus spoke four times about laying down His life for the sheep. And it dawned on us that as the Lord's "sent ones," we cannot ask to be spared from death itself

if that is the Lord's chosen means of bringing in some of His sheep into the fold. All the more, we cannot expect to be spared from the life that is "a daily dying." Romans 8:35-39 came to mind with great force:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

How we thank and bless the Lord for this glorious truth--NOTHING can separate us from His love in Christ Jesus our Lord! Whatever other afflictions and difficulties await us according to His perfect love and wisdom, He will be there interceding for us, upholding us in His grace, and—amazingly--glorifying His name in our lives!

Thank you again dear friends for your love, prayers, concern, and sacrificial giving! We thank the Lord for your friendship in the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!

In Him who is Heart of our own hearts and Ruler of all,

Mike and Rebecca

Double-click on this link for secure online giving: <http://www.actioninternational.org/watters>. Or send your gift for Mike and Rebecca Watters 40026A (monthly support) or 40026B (outgoing funds) to: ACTION USA • PO Box 398, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043-0398 • Tel. 425.775.4800 • info@actionusa.org ACTION Canada • 3015A 21 Street NE, Calgary, Alberta T2E 7T1 • Tel. 403.204.1421 • info@actioncanada.org ACTION New Zealand • PO Box 8928, Christchurch 8440 • Tel. 011.643.341.0933 • rob@brighthopeworld.com ACTION Philippines • PO Box 110, Greenhills Post Office, 1502 Metro Manila • Tel. 632.531.3709 • take.action@actionintl.org ACTION United Kingdom • PO Box 144, Wallasey, Wirral CH44 5WE • Tel. 011.151.630.2451 • info@actionuk.org • Registered Charity 1058661 All gifts made out to ACTION are used as designated and received for tax purposes.



Mike and Pastor Roger Alcantara (father and son) at the dairy farm of Sta. Cruz Baptist Church in Lipa City, Batangas. The farm has 44 milk supports a learning center for young children and cows and by God's grace is considered a model farm a college educational assistance program for deserving not only in the Philippines but in Asia. youth.



Rose (shown at left) at the Sta. Cruz Baptist Learning Center with Myleen, one of the teachers. (Myleen finished her schooling through the church's college educational assistance program and is disciple women in Guiding Light Christian Church.) now a licensed teacher.) Trading Minnesota stories with Mommy Paz Lacanaria Church in Baguio City. (She is the mother of Sis. Zabeth and Sis. Cita who church's college educational assistance program and is disciple women in Guiding Light Christian Church.) now a licensed teacher.)



Pastor Robbie Casas of Guiding Light Christian Reporting to the brethren at Bond Servants of Love Church leading the congregation in praying for us . Christian Church.



Some of the more than 150 brethren who encouraged us greatly by coming to our Open House at HRCC. 12 other sisters volunteered to distribute the tasty Filipino snacks prepared by Lai Dizon at the Open House.