



FEBRUARY 2023

## NOT EASY, BUT WORTH IT

### *Praises and Prayer*

- Continue to pray with us for God to provide teachers and other staff for next year!
- Praise God with me that the past few years have given me a greater understanding of anxiety and some tools to deal with it, but also pray for me to seek and see His light in the midst of the more difficult moments/days.
- Praise God with us that He has a plan for Rain Forest International School, and join us in open-mindedly seeking His leading.

*When I said, “My foot is slipping,” your unfailing love, LORD, supported me.*

*When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy.*

PSALM 94:18-19 (NIV)



*A very special time in Paris over New Year's with some friends.*

Sometimes I still find it difficult to accept that anxiety has become a companion of mine and a reality that must be acknowledged at times. Realistically, it isn't anything new. We all have times throughout our lives where we worry or 'stress' about things outside of our control – times

when we need to be reminded of God's repeated words to Joshua to be “strong and courageous” or when Paul's encouragement to “not be anxious about anything” seems a bit more challenging.

However, reaching a point of burnout in February 2021 changed me. Since then, I have acquired an increased tendency toward and carried a heightened awareness of my own ability to succumb to those feelings . . . an awareness of the existence (and sometimes nearness) of limits to my own emotional capacity. Score one for self-awareness, I guess, but I can't say that it is a pleasant thing!

God has been gracious to me, granting so much healing during my home assignment year, and He has continued to bless me tremendously through our community here in Cameroon since my return in June. Life has been . . . I hesitate to say it . . . relatively easy, or at least what I might call



*Twinning with a friend and colleague (Goodness) for "Twin Day" at school.*

‘normal.’ I have been enjoying my return to the classroom, and in so many ways this IS HOME.

I won't deny that as a school community we have seen some challenges and are facing some major decisions about our future – decisions that could be the source of great anxiety, but that we are laying at the feet of Jesus. Many versions of the sentiment behind the old quote ‘I know not what the future holds, but I know who holds the future’ have floated through out midst more times than I can count! Though many discussions are happening, I have found myself so often thankful to be OUTSIDE the administrative circle of those responsible to make decisions!

But here is where the honesty is a bit less comfortable for all of us – in the past few weeks, my equilibrium has been shaken, and, for the first time since the spring and summer of 2021, that anxiety has been lurking much nearer the surface. There hasn't been any major stressor or event, no significant changes, and my life isn't any more busy than normal. I'm still working on figuring it all out. One of the extra challenges of anxiety for Christians is exercising discernment and wisdom in finding the balance between reflecting on what might be causing or triggering the emotion (to be able to adapt and make wise decisions or adjustments that could prevent future anxiety) and handing the burden of that anxiety over to The Lord to carry. I know that God has a plan in all of this and that He is using it to mold me in some way, to use me and/or my story to ultimately serve His greater purpose . . . that doesn't make it easy, but it DOES make it all worth it.



*Exciting times – my screen porch is under construction!*

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