

The Drum Family

SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST AROUND THE GLOBE

May 2013

Galatians 6:2a
Share each other's burdens

It took a while for us to break, but it finally happened this month. We knew it was coming. We had been feeling it for a long time. We were trained that it would happen. But somehow, you still aren't prepared when it happens. We hit the wall. The grief finally became too great. And slowly we began to crack and crumble under the pressure of keeping up the façade that all was well, that we were transitioning nicely, and that we had it all together. The truth — we are hurting and broken and lost.

I don't know exactly why we tried to keep on the mask, to keep up the 'game face'. Part of me felt like it was my 'job' to smile through the storm and to grin and bear it. Part of me felt like if I just stayed busy enough, then I wouldn't notice the pain, or that others wouldn't notice it in me. So I kept my to-do list full, my calendar booked, and my smile was always on-call. But little by little, my resolve was withering.



One day, I just couldn't take it any more. One day after many days of secret depression, of sleepless nights, of eating binges to somehow drown my troubles of culture shock and grief and the loss of identity and place... I woke up and went into the bathroom to get myself ready and it hit me. The overwhelming sadness hit and I came out of the bathroom a different person, all the emotions hitting me in rapid fire. I was sobbing. I was fearful. I was exhausted. I didn't know what to do with myself and that scared me. And poor Billy, he was left standing there, staring at a mumbling, broken woman who couldn't even verbalize what was wrong.

It just so happened to be the same day that I was to give the morning devotions for the church staff. Which made me cry even more when I realized that... How was I supposed to give a devotional talk to the church staff when I can't even hold myself together long enough to get

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dressed?! I felt like a fake and a fraud—I had been keeping up a front and wearing the “I’m fine, I’m doing great” mask for months. And it was all a lie.

I went in to devotions that morning and got honest with the staff. “I’m not fine. We (Billy and I) aren’t fine. We are hurting. We are sad. We are grieving. I’ve been in a state of denial, I guess. I haven’t been real with you. I haven’t been transparent with you. And I’m sorry.”

We (the staff) talked for a long while about being real and how that effects each of us. How being in ministry somehow equates to ‘you are perfect and you have it all together’ in the eyes of others. It was a good conversation, and it was a turning point in healing for Billy and I.

Since that conversation, MANY people have come to our temporary office ‘to get real’ with us. We have had some of the most meaningful and deep conversations that I can remember having in the past 10 years! We have shared hurts and struggles with each other, we have shared stories, we have cried together, and we have laughed until we hurt... and until the hurt went away. One friend recognized our pain and reached out with the name of a good counselor for us to seek out, which we have done.

During one of our sessions, I realized that not only have we not been real with ourselves and honest with those immediately around us, but we haven’t been open with you—our supporters and sponsors and prayer warriors, our family and friends. We haven’t given you the opportunity to share in this part of the journey with us, and that isn’t fair to you. Because, as the Body of Christ, we are to share each other’s burdens and to walk the path

together. There is always a fear for missionaries—not just us, but many others—that our supporters and our family and friends only want to hear the good news stories. We hold back the vast majority of the hardship stories and the struggles. I have had many conversations with other missionaries who walk this fine line of what to tell vs. what not to tell. Fear of losing funding, fear of what others might think, fear of appearing weak, fear of not being acceptable if we are broken... And there you have it. It is about fear.

Our wise counselor pointed out that we hadn’t given The Church Body a chance to carry our burdens or to walk with us. She also likened our partnership to a marriage of sorts. She asked me, “If Billy shared with you that he was grieving and brokenhearted and struggling, would you turn your back on him? Would you consider him weak? Would you withdraw your love or support for him?” Of course my answer was vehemently “No!”

My immediate thought was, “Oh no! I have not shared these things and not given our supporters / friends / family the opportunity to help us or to carry our burdens, but I have been hiding it from them. I have cheated them, in some way. I have wronged them and myself.”

So, here I stand before you, repentant and asking for forgiveness.

Today, we are on the healing path. It isn’t easy. We still hurt. We are working through some things. But we stand in the face of grief over Peru and lost friends and identity, in the face of transition and fear and doubt, and we admit it all. We’re coming clean. Please stand with us and help us move forward. We love you!

~Laurie & Billy

*"Prayer does not fit us for the greater work;
prayer is the greater work." Oswald Chambers*

Pray for our visa process. We continue to wait (sometimes with less patience than we should) for the first letter in the paperwork to make its way through the Ministry of Justice in Spain. When that happens, then we will be able to put the other paperwork with it and submit it to the Embassy in Houston. In the meantime, we wait. Pray for us to wait with grace, to rest and recuperate in this time, and to see His plan for us in this time of waiting.

Pray for our time of transition, for the grief process, and for our ability to cope and take care of our own souls during this time (see main article). We are struggling.

Pray for Spain! (see article on page 3) The economic situation there is getting worse and unemployment is rising. Pray for hearts to turn to Him as their source of comfort and Peace—the Provider, the Healer, the King of Kings, the Father.

Pray for our financial needs—we continue to speak to individuals and churches to secure our financial support and prayer partners for our new deployment. Our new assignment will require a bit more in terms of budget, which increases our need for support. Please consider how you can help.

Spain in a time of extreme uncertainty

Statistics posted April 30, 2013 show Andalusia (the region of Spain in which we will be living) to have hit an incredible **36.9 percent unemployment** rate!

- 26.2 percent of the total workforce has not had a job in 6 months.
- 21.4 percent have not held a job in the past year.
- 13.9 percent have been without work for two years.
- Agricultural and construction workers are the hardest hit.
- Neighboring regions of Extremadura, Castille-La Mancha, and Murcia (regions roughly encompassing the entire lower half of the country) show numbers of 35.6%, 31.5% and 30.4%. To get below the 20% unemployment mark, you must be located in the northern areas of the country.
- 66.4 percent of eligible workers under age 25 are unemployed.



These numbers reflect the eligible Spanish workforce. We recently read that 260,000 young people between the ages of 16-30 have left the country altogether in search of work in France and other areas. That's an entire generation of Spaniards that are 'lost' due to unemployment and economic issues. For immigrants and populations that entered Spain from other areas? You can only imagine the unemployment numbers for these people groups.

When we were in Spain in February to begin the groundwork for our transition, we noticed that many storefronts were closed. We thought that this was due to the area being somewhat of a 'seasonal' area and we were visiting in winter, but we were later informed that, no, these closures were due to economic downturn and the owners had been forced to shut down. Storefront after storefront empty and dark and locked.

Pray for Spain in this time of extreme uncertainty. Pray for families that daily face the reality of no work and an economic crisis. And pray for people to find comfort and peace in Him.

Sources: <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/04/the-most-doomed-part-of-spain-in-2-charts/275395/>
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/apr/28/spain-indignados-protests-state-of-mind>



DEAR BILLY AND LAURIE,

I will pray for you.
 As God provides, I plan to partner with you by giving
\$ _____ Per month / quarter / year for _____ years.
 I would like to donate a one-time gift of \$ _____

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TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIFTS MAY BE SENT TO:
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We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God.' - John Stott

Drum's Contact Info



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Don't miss this month's award-winning
Unfinished Magazine!

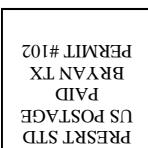
Read the latest edition of Unfinished Magazine! This month's issue is all about helping missionaries as they serve, how to love on them and care for them, and ways you can help! Click here for the online version
<http://issuu.com/themissionsociety/docs/issue55/1#share>



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