

McCrackens leaving Greece

October 15, 2012

Five-and-a-half years ago God brought into our lives one of the most precious and beautiful gifts we have ever received. In fact, it was a gift Vicki and I each dreamed of from the time we were children (long before we knew each other). Never before have I ever associated the word "destiny" with ANYTHING in my life except this amazing gift He gave us in our youngest daughter Ellie. In fact the middle name we gave her is MingYun (Chinese for "destiny"). Although ALL of our children are marvelous gifts and blessings for which we are thankful to God, Ellie's special needs have presented us with unique blessings (as well as unique challenges, given our location and other related factors).

For at least two years Vicki and I have been praying with great intensity and intentionality, asking for God to help us understand how we can be "the best parents to Ellie we can be" from GOD'S perspective (NOT simply from our culture's). We are not sure yet that we clearly understand all that entails. However, for the last 5 years it has included staying in Greece.

We are at a place now in our seeking God where we believe it is time to start "winding things down" in this country and look for what God has in store for us back in America.

It is impossible to communicate the pain we feel in thinking about leaving DEEP friendships, dearly loved colleagues, a vibrant ministry, and our home of over 22 years. However, we also have a strong and abiding peace from God that we are facing the right direction.

The NEXT 9 MONTHS or so will be spent researching future ministry possibilities with International Teams in the U.S. (preferably with refugees/immigrants and/or with end-slavery ministries), researching locations in America that would offer good opportunities for special needs kids, pouring our life into making disciples of refugees in Athens, and doing our best here to finish well. We hope to be back somewhere in the U.S. by summer of 2013.

The prayerful encouragement of our I.T. leadership has been much appreciated as we have interacted about these issues. Anthony Jones, Vice President of Ministry Development summed it up well:

"I have walked with Scott and Vicki over the past months as they have wrestled with the decision regarding their future, and it hasn't been easy for them. They are torn between their love for Athens (particularly the refugees), and their love and responsibilities for Ellie who God has put into their care. It is becoming very clear that Ellie will have a better chance to thrive in America, while the opportunities in Greece are diminishing; hence, the decision to head back there in the next year. Scott and Vicki have my full support. For sure, there will be sadness in Athens amongst the refugees but this is matched with the building excitement about where Scott and Vicki could minister with International Teams in the States. We look forward to new and exciting developments."

Thank you so much for your prayers, the many ways you have walked this journey with us, and for the outpouring of encouragement we have received from you over the years. We so much appreciate your continued support and covet your prayers, especially in these days. We are walking by faith in a whole new way! Please let us know if you have any questions or if we can clarify anything for you. We will keep you in the loop as our plans unfold!

Grateful,

Scott and Vicki McCracken