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Wendell & Dianne Merritt

Revisiting Our “Creative Best”

Last December we wrote in our newsletter about “Our Creative Best Given Through the Creator.” Since then we have spent a great deal of time considering the implications of Galatians 6:4-5 in the text box to the right. We wrote in December, “These verses in Galatians speak deeply into our hearts as we appear to be in a season of discovery. ... God is continually reminding us that He has orchestrated our lives and that we are responsible for doing the creative best with what we have been given.”

We have spent several months in reflection, prayer and discussion. After much self exploration and each-other exploration, we have reached some conclusions. Some of the following conclusions are firm, and some are vague.

We have responsibility **here in Texas** and are not likely to live again in the foreign field. This has significant impact on subsequent conclusions.

There are ministry opportunities **all around us**, and all around you too wherever you are and wherever you go.



Our location and our “work status” with a ministry organization have little bearing on the abundance of ministry opportunities within our sphere of influence.

We have noticed that our “creative best,” referring to the Galatians 6 verse, does not match well with our ministry at CAM International here in Dallas at the headquarters office. Therefore, we have decided to **resign from CAM** effective June 30.

This has been a difficult decision over several months. We have talked, grieved, searched our hearts, and wondered if we were truly hearing the Lord. Though sometimes tedious, this exploratory process has been spiritually profitable, and we believe it is time to move to another chapter in

our lives.

Our desire is to have **flexibility and availability** in order to be able to respond to the Lord. We have decided that we need to reposition ourselves to be **self supported** financially rather than donor funded.

Those are the conclusions so far. Beyond these, clarity comes only by means of faith.

CAM continues paying our compensation and accepting donations for 60 days. Receipting of donations stops after **August 30**. Therefore, for those of you, who might have electronic payment of donations on our behalf, please note that you will need to terminate these electronic transactions by August 30.

Galatians 6:4-5

Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life.
(The Message)

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What's Next?

What's next? We don't know entirely. We are closing a chapter in our lives and opening the next without knowing what lies ahead. This step is unlike the way we usually do things and a bit risky in the world's eyes. Since God gives us the desires of our hearts, we have to look at the experiences He has allowed in our lives and trust that these desires are of God.

During the past years we have had numerous opportunities to spend extended time with various groups of

people ranging from work teams to conferences to retreats. The elements most satisfying were connection, authenticity, friendship, and community in a safe place in order to grow in Christ. These experiences have been spiritual highlights for us and lead us to a **hospitality and retreat focus**.

An article by Marie Loewen in *Conversations* (Spring 2007) expresses our desire. "Hospitality of soul is incarnational. It is a willingness to share a safe place where others may come to

rest and explore and heal as we embody the reality of God for them." Also, Psalm 27:4b-5 reads, "I'll contemplate his beauty; I'll study at his feet. That's the only quiet, secure place in a noisy world, the perfect getaway, far from the buzz of traffic" (The Message). We desire to offer a safe place along the way, a place of friendship, direction and respite, a place of refreshment and renewal. One might say **hospitality with a purpose**.

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Praise

- Your love and care for us. We are grateful!
- God's love and care for us. We are grateful!
- Our time in Guatemala and the impact it had on our lives.
- Fulfilling 5 years with CAM International.

Prayer

- Psalm 90:17 — May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us...
- God will establish us with self-supporting income in order to be flexible for His purposes.
- We will cling to the presence and ministry of the Holy Trinity within us and around us.
- We can see through spiritual eyes and respond to the ministry opportunities around us.

Tent Making

I anticipate spending the next several months in establishing ourselves in self supported income (tent making). I expect this to be acquisition and management of Dallas-area rental properties. This environment is an unprecedented opportunity to acquire. However, I am open to other opportunities for tent-making income.

With Deep Appreciation for You...

We value your friendship and community with us. We truly do.

We *are* grateful – to all of you who have ministered to us by your friendship, prayers, donations, trips, visits, and most importantly,

love. We *are* grateful – to CAM for using us cross-culturally. We *are* grateful – to our family members for enduring the separation while we were in Guatemala and for loving us as only a tight knit family can. We *are*

grateful – to the Lord, most importantly, for His provision, guidance, and care.

As always, we love hearing from you. Please stay in touch. We hope to continue periodic newsletters for prayer purposes and ac-

countability.

We thank God for you and will always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from this first day until now.

— Wendell and Dianne