

IRANDUBA - APRIL, 2012

Batter my heart, three-personed God;

For you

As yet but knock, breathe, shine - and seek to mend;

That I may rise and stand, overthrow me,

And bend Your force

To break, blow, burn and make me new.

When I came across this poem by John Donne, it instantly became a prayer. The last few months have been overwhelming; there have been many surprises and changes around each new bend in the road so this "semester" in God's school has been rather traumatic!

We spent Christmas and New Year moving to our new location. It was quite an ordeal since we had no outside help, and the lifting and shifting was especially hard on Wes. I helped, but I am definitely a flunky when it comes to heavy items! But we made it in one piece and love the fact that this is our home.

There is still no indoor plumbing, but we have a clean "pathroom". And, thanks to Andrew Janzen, we have a facility for a bucket shower as well - just like uptown! There are advantages to this lifestyle: no squeegeeing necessary, no expense for air freshener, lots of great daily exercise treading the path ... the ever-present music of birds. Our light system is still pretty precarious; however, a battery with an inverter and a borrowed generator keep living on the edge of modernity. We are so grateful for rain water and well water, but these amenities are very, very time consuming. Wes

calculated it takes 100 pumps to fill one large pail of water - 800 pumps to do wash. His muscles have definitely grown.

In February Wes began to lag, losing weight at a startling rate. By March he was down to 135 pounds! The family rallied together and flew us to Santa Cruz. Placido performed prostate surgery and we all thanked the Lord that the biopsy came back negative for any malignancy. However, Placido removed a basal cell carcinoma from his nose as well. Placido and Toni stipulated we would only be allowed to return to Brazil when Wes gained weight. The problem with that was that I also gained. So fatter and healthier, we both hoped life would settle down.

Then Sunny decided to take the leap and marry a doctor she had met in ministry in Bolivia. It all happened very quickly and it meant another trip. On March 31 she and Jonatan Terraza Torres exchanged vows in a very simple but beautiful ceremony on the beach in Salvador, Bahia where Sunny is doing a residency in family medicine. Jonatan plans to do his specialization and training in surgery there as well as soon as his papers are okayed. Please pray for this precious daughter and her husband as each adjusts to sharing the independence they enjoyed for so long!

We are back "home" once again - very tired but recuperating. And the big question remains: Why in God's great eternal plan did He move two foolish old, weakening people to Iranduba, Amazonas anyway! Wes views this as the most difficult assignment from God to date. Waiting on Him has not been easy - our faith has been stretched almost to the breaking point. Yet at the same time, we need only to review His great, great faithfulness and unfailing love and goodness ... and His quiet peace gently flows into our hearts

again. No doubt this whole process has been His loving way of "overthrowing" us - to remake us into something new.

There is some encouraging news: Alcerís and Arlene are living in Iranduba (in the rented house where we used to live). They have been a delight, and Wes has joined both of them three times a week for clean-up work on the school property which can only be reached by boat at this time of the year. There are plans to begin teaching modules there in August. No official classroom or other facilities exist; there are places to hang hammocks, and there are "pathrooms". There are no electric lights, but lots of water everywhere! Like at Ammi, we have no guarantee of any incoming students! So we are both apprehensive and excited.

Would you pray that God would encourage our hearts? Would you pray that as we wait on Him, He will renew our strength? Would you pray that Alcerís' and Arlene's vision of what He can do through them would grow? Would you pray that God would hand-pick those who should come for this first module? Would you pray for God's protection on our hearts and minds as we seek to live for Him in an increasingly careless world.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE MEANT TO US PERSONALLY AND TO THIS MINISTRY. We love you. Trudy for both of us