

# The Journey

"Never doubt in the darkness what you know to be true in the light"

Are we making the right decision?

## GUATAMALA FACTS:

- The indigenous Quiche' Mayans of Chichicastenango number over a million, making them the largest native group in Guatemala.
- The rural population of Guatemala has 74.5% living below the poverty line
- 15.9% live below US \$1 a day, and 37.4% live below US \$2 a day
- Major exports: Coffee 22% of exportable goods, sugar 16%, and bananas 16%.
- Only 52% of rural population have access to sanitation facilities.
- Only 41 percent of school-aged children in Guatemala attend classes, and only 55.6 percent of the total population are literate.

I feel like I've been in the belly of a whale the last 20 years. I have experienced suffering that has seemed to go beyond the norm for many around me. Some (and my wife would say "most") of this pain arrived as a result of my own poor decision-making. And it is true that for as long as I can remember I have often chosen not to follow the route God desired for me. Of course, I seldom knew this in "real time"... only in retrospect.

But I have never in my life felt better about a decision than the one we are making as a family to enter into ministry in Chichicastenango, Guatemala. The reasons we are going, for the first time, don't make a lot of human sense. And that is a good thing. The opportunities for health, prosperity and safety in Guatemala are dwarfed by the lives we already know here in the States. Now, of course we do believe there are benefits in living and raising our children in Guatemala...but we've done the math, and made our lists, and it doesn't **really** make sense. Not really.

And yet, we have never been more secure in this decision which is calling

us so far from our home, friends and family. We have heard God's voice and the voice has been clear. **The Voice** said, "Tear up your lists and follow me." **The Voice** whispered, "You were created for this." **The Voice** assured us, "You will be safer in my will than outside of it." **The Voice** even reminded us, "If there was something in it for you, you wouldn't have been called." And finally, **The Voice** commanded, "Don't worry about what you don't have, what you can't do, what you may encounter...simply TRUST ME...and go."



So, we are leaving in August. The tickets have been purchased. The bags are being packed. Our hearts are being prepared. And God is pleased with us...with me.

Let me just stop there. I haven't been able to truly say that for 20 years...

I know our direction and focus as a family is the right one for us...for now. We are going

to give our lives to others because Jesus has done so much for us. We know we lack in gifting and preparation, and even our character is in development. We have already been attacked, and we've never disagreed with many of the negative critiques, and that's because we know the less we are, the more God will feel comfortable using us to glorify **His son**, and extend **His grace**, and speak **His message**. In other words, it won't be about us...it will be about Him.

The next time you hear from us we will be in Chichi. We are treating these communications as a journal, or a record of our thoughts, hopes, dreams, successes and even failures. We know we may have to go through some hard things ahead. We may even have tragedy come our way in Guatemala, but we wanted to let everyone know that we are in His hands. We are following God, and we would rather experience hardship while following Him, than when following our own dreams and desires, however good and noble they may seem.

**In His loving hands,**

Don and Heather  
Aidan and Althea



### What we will be doing

Don and Heather will be serving on staff at Missions Frontier in Chichicastenango, Guatemala. Missions Frontier's basic goal is to empower God's people to fulfill His "Great Commission." Its ministry is centered on economic development, short-term missions opportunities, education and supporting the growth of the local church. The reason we continue to speak so much of the poverty and helplessness in Chichi is because we are going to work

with an organization that is committed to overcoming those obstacles to help achieve growth and spiritual development.



Mission's Frontier has been creating ministries, educational and business opportunities for the local people whom they have witnessed come to know

Jesus only after having their lives transformed by a simple job and ability to provide for themselves. Heather will be working with the local educational organizations in a mentoring and administrative role, and Don will be serving the local missionaries, doctors and short-term teams who come every year but have no one to pastor them in the field. We feel that God has uniquely prepared us for these very roles.



All of the efforts of Missions Frontier will be coordinated through the local church and designed to avoid dependence and the stifling of local initiative.



"You will be safer in my will than outside of it."

### Prayer Concerns

- Althea will be having her oversized tonsils removed on July 22. There will be a 2-week recovery period.
- We are working on getting Max (our family dog) to Guatemala with us. This will help the kids (and Dad) adapt to our new home.
- We don't have the resources for rabies vaccine shots...pray that we stay clear of rabid animals.
- Pray for spiritual protection from the attacks of Satan. He has been working overtime on trying to penetrate our hearts with fear and worry. We've had many restless nights.
- We will all be adjusting to new roles, and a new home in a place where few speak our language. Pray that God will give us peace and patience... especially for Aidan and Ali, and that loved ones will visit us in Chichi just when we need it!

### Financial Situation

We have purchased our tickets to Guatemala, and will be leaving on August 20. We made this decision for 2 reasons:

1. We wanted to move in faith.
2. We did not want to ever be in the position where

our support funds would need to sustain here in the United States.

Heather's school income and family insurance will cease in late August. We felt like we needed to move on this decision. Our support per month is short about \$1,500

and we are short \$10,000 of reaching our sending organization's 80% goal for us.

We believe that God will come through... *through you*, and meet our needs before we go to Chichicastenango.

Will you pray this week, and seriously consider

supporting us on a monthly basis, or with a special gift? We have included a pledge card for your convenience.

