



Serving God worldwide by writing about His work

The Heffrons

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Brian's ministry:

- Tell stories.
- Encourage people.
- Help schools be gooder.
- Share Christ's love in words and deeds.

Prayers, please:

- Thanks for encouraging conversations with people interested in sponsoring this work.
- That we be a blessing and encouragement to others.
- That churches and individuals help us meet our budget by the end of the year.
- For the schools, teachers, students and families in Africa to be blessed.
- For a good school year for all my former students and colleagues as they adapt to new standards and decreased staffing.

News:

- New blog & web site in development at TheHeffronFamily.com.
- Our church will host a missions festival Oct. 26 through Nov. 17. Check the blog for details.

Hearing God in life's little door dings

So, I had an accident September 12. Nothing major. Just a little fender bender. Nothing to write about.

Except that God sometimes has a great sense of humor when He needs to tell us something.

After two encouraging meetings with potential supporters, I stopped for a quick lunch before heading to the last one. I pulled into the parking lot, got blocked by traffic, and then had to watch a van slowly back into my driver's door.

I was hot. I was furious. I was sure that our van-for-the-next-ten-years was hopelessly marred. And I didn't dare get out, because the other van looked like it was about to back up again. If I stepped out, I was likely to get my leg crushed by the door.

The thought that I *could* get my leg crushed reminded me that I hadn't, that I hadn't been hurt at all. Time to sit still reminded me that God doesn't want us to act the way I was acting. I calmed down.

I was still mad when I got out, but the damage was minor. The door was creased slightly in two places, but it had already popped back out. Everything worked fine. I went to talk to the other driver and met someone surprising.

Someone a lot like me. 91 years old, 5'1" tall, 100 pounds if that much. Certainly not my twin, but those things aren't what make our

humanity, aren't what connect us. She was a little confused and a lot embarrassed about what had just happened. She said she hadn't heard my horn or warning shouts over her radio. She had gotten distracted for a moment, didn't notice a hazard, and had an accident. I'm less than half her age, but I've had a lot more close calls and accidents. She asked about the damage. She apologized.

With my van safely parked, we started talking. I stood in the rain for forty-five minutes, just blessed to listen to this elderly woman talk about her life and family and faith and helping others.

Inside, I was laughing at myself, at my follies and flaws. I laughed about how many lessons God still has for me and how much it takes sometimes for me to give Him my attention. God didn't use a booming voice from a cloud or even a discernible voice in my head. He just got my attention and filled me with a sense of His nature and will and priorities.

He reminded me that He might bless us with things like shiny vans but that they don't matter. He told me to slow down and listen by having her forget to. He told me to put others first as I realized the polite thing would be to use my fresh handkerchief to wipe the rain off her windowsill. He prompted me to get her the seatbelt that she wasn't

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." – John 14:27

wearing. He told me to be a blessing and let myself be blessed by all whom I encounter.

Most importantly, though, He reminded me to forgive, to love, to be grateful and gracious. At the end of our time together, I asked her to forgive me for getting angry and thanked her for backing into my van so that I could be blessed through her.

I think about her often. I pray for her and thank God for introducing us. She's reading this, and I think that's pretty amazing.

In Senegal, the main effect on me

was that God became more real to me in a way that I still can't fully explain, in a way that I'm still learning about and from. In Mongolia, I encountered God's desire that we share Him with the world. In Zambia, I experienced His desire for us to visit widows and orphans in their distress.

But just a few miles from home the other day, it was about truly learning that what we do for those at our mercy, we truly do for Him.

It was about encountering Christ in "a little old lady" and finding room for a little more of Him in myself.

Updates, developments, and current tasks

My ministry is to write, to tell stories that will help people draw closer to and learn more about each other and God.

Specifically, I will focus on stories about SIM's work in African schools through TEN3, but I can't really begin that work until I'm fully funded. My work right now is to complete my training, meet with potential supporters, and share stories about the lessons I'm learning through those tasks.

Getting funded isn't the point of these newsletters, though. Within SIM, they're actually called prayer letters, and that's a pretty good reminder of their focus. They're about letting people know how we're progressing and what prayers we could use. These letters are about sharing stories of God's work in and through us and the ministries we're developing.

For now, the stories I want to tell aren't available yet. I haven't been able to travel to Nigeria or Cameroon or (back to) Zambia to get them yet. But they're there, waiting for someone to tell them. That's the goal and purpose of my ministry: to tell stories

that haven't been gathered yet.

For years, TEN3 (Transformational Education Network) has often been misunderstood as "that computer ministry," but they do much more than that. They gather working but unwanted laptops and set them up with software so that African students can use them in classes. They work with schools to improve teacher training and develop better curricula. They help mothers care for their children better. They help others use technology and education in ways that will transform their lives, their families, their communities, and the nations. I'll get to help them by connecting them to strangers who will become friends.

It's an exciting time. There is so much to do, so much to establish and accomplish at once. All the while, I get to tell stories again and to visit with people and learn theirs. I've missed that since I moved from reporting to teaching, and it's good to have the autonomy in my schedule to do so. There is so much I'm learning and remembering.

Thanks for coming along. Thanks for reading and praying.

That reminds me of a song...

*Give me Your eyes
for just one second.
Give me Your eyes
so I can see.*

*Everything
that I keep missing.
Give me Your love
for humanity.*

*Give me Your arms
for the broken-hearted,
The ones that are far
beyond my reach.
Give me Your heart for
the ones forgotten.
Give me Your eyes
so I can see.*

"Give Me Your Eyes"
by Brandon Heath

SIM's Core Values

1. Committed to Biblical Truth
2. Dependent on God
3. A People of Prayer
4. Mission-Focused
5. Church-Centered
6. Concerned About Human Needs
7. A Christlike Community
8. A Learning, Growing Community
9. Strengthened Through Diversity
10. Responsive to Our Times

Save a tree?

Email me or scan that → to receive this newsletter by email instead of paper.



Respond to Need. Proclaim the Gospel. Equip the Church.