

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" Hebrews 11:6

Dear friends and family,

Greetings! I wanted to share with you a few stories of God's faithfulness as Christopher and I traveled to Western Massachusetts last week to take him to Williams College, where he will be studying this year. The verse above was brought to mind often by the Holy Spirit because we were truly on a faith walk. Hurricane Irene was due to the Boston area around the time we were landing on August 27. We prayed that if we were not supposed to go that God would allow the flight to be cancelled, but as it turned out, our flight was one of the last ones to arrive at the Boston airport for the weekend. Right before our departure the Lord reminded me of Psalm 91, which I strongly encourage you to read if you ever want to know about God's covenant of protection for His people!

As we picked up our rental car at the Boston airport, Brad advised that we go west as fast as we could with the hope of avoiding the coast and Hurricane Irene. As we drove across Massachusetts the sky was dark and foreboding, but the rain light enough for me to navigate my way to Lenox where we planned to hunker down for the storm. High tech Christopher studied Irene from every angle on his computer and showed me the path of the storm, which now was due to head straight to where we were! We prayed for protection and were led to Psalm 93:3-4 "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the voice of many waters, than the mighty waves of the sea." Also, when we read our devotion for August 30 it just happened to talk about storms. It said that storms point us to Christ and our need for Him. Spurgeon wrote "remember that we have no more faith at any time than we have in the hour of trial. All that will not bear to be tested is mere carnal confidence. Fair weather faith is no faith."

We watched in awe as Irene changed course and jumped up to New York and Vermont and then died out. All that we experienced were relatively high winds and rain. Although many lost their electricity in New England and there was severe flooding in some parts of New York and Vermont, there were very few fatalities and Irene was not that devastating. We grieve with any who suffered in any way. From our little corner of the storm we were very thankful that the storm ended sooner and with less damage than expected for New England.

Williamstown is the quintessential New England town that dates back to 1753 and Williams College was founded in 1793. The architecture was gorgeous and the new blended seamlessly with the old. The town is surrounded by the Berkshire Mountains, which we in the west would call hills since the highest peak (Mount Greylock) is 3491 ft. elevation. We could see the beginning of the fall colors and apparently the scene is breathtaking when all those hills are ablaze in color. The college boasts 2000 students from all over the world and is the top ranked liberal arts college in the US for the 2nd year running. It really felt like a global village and in Christopher's 20 person dorm his fellow freshmen come from Bulgaria, Canada, Zimbabwe, Korea, Pakistan, and the U.S. Chris' room mate Jeewan is the national debate champion for South Korea and we covet your prayers for him. They are getting along really well which is great for two debaters!! 😊 Christopher is really trying to get to know everyone in the dorm and feels really blessed with the dorm leaders Alex and Holly as well as the students.

The Lord gave me Jeremiah 1:5 for Christopher on the first day of orientation "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations. Then I said 'Ah Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.' But the Lord said to me: Do not say, 'I am a youth,' for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord." On the second night of orientation meetings it became clear to Christopher that a key spiritual stronghold on campus was the

gay and lesbian agenda ushered through the Multicultural Department. Even though very few students follow their agenda, the orientations included this perspective. The Lord gave him an opportunity to articulately present an alternative view to the false dilemma's one gal presented about sexual choices in college. Christopher was able to explain God's plan for relationships and marriage and, praise God, most of his fellow dorm mates agreed with Chris! The gal was "outgunned" and forced to retreat a bit. She acknowledged that Chris had a good point and that this perspective should be included and encouraged. Please pray for Chris, as he is truly a missionary on campus and the opportunities abound. He has already talked with a wonderful Irish Catholic from New York, and a gal from Pakistan who shared about Islamic holidays and Chris got to share about homeschooling, which was an entirely new concept for her.

I was very impressed with the student body and general feeling on campus. The students are very thankful to be there, as are the staff and faculty. There is a humility which really struck me in a population of very accomplished kids. The international students really help to give perspective on this. The town and campus are very quiet and the party scene is minimal. The Williams Christian Fellowship will be a great haven from the storms for Christopher and the group is very mature and on fire for Jesus. When Brad and Christopher visited the campus in April they were really impressed with this group and all that they were doing as missionaries to their campus and beyond. We have been praying for a Christian professor that Christopher can look to as a mentor. At the WCF meeting last night Christopher discovered that his Calculus Professor is a strong believer and will be the professor linked to WCF.

Before arriving, our family really struggled about some of the postings we saw on Facebook about Christopher's future roommate Jeewan. We wondered about his character and integrity and really committed it to prayer. In the end we had a wonderful peace about the situation, even though we did not yet have any reason, from the outside looking in, to be hopeful. I got to meet Jeewan and his mother on move in day. They both seemed really sweet. A few days later Christopher got an opportunity to speak with Jeewan about some of his Facebook information. Jeewan was shocked to discover that someone had hacked his information and there was some wrong information posted. We are relieved to know that Jeewan is indeed a fine young man. He is also really searching for God and Chris had has a lot of opportunity to talk with him. Please pray for Jeewan. His mother and grandfather are believers and we know that they are praying as well!

Tonight on the phone Christopher said that he stepped outside after a wonderful dinner and the sun was setting. He had a beautiful view of the mountains all around him and he praised God out loud for the opportunity to be at Williams! He has more on his plate then he will most likely be able to handle, but he has the enjoyable task of carving out a manageable schedule. His courses include Modern Political Thought (taught by a black woman who is a visiting professor from South Africa), US History from Jamestown to the Civil War, Intermediate Calculus, and Economics. He auditioned for 4 different men's singing groups and hopes to join one of them. He has been asked by Williams Christian Fellowship to lead a Freshman Bible Study. He also will take hikes with the Outdoor club and play basketball whenever possible. He works on campus as well 7 hours a week.

We really covet your prayers for Chris:

Quality time with Jesus each morning

To be a bright light on campus

To have strong brothers in Christ, accountability partners, and mentors

To be able to do well in his 4 classes and use his time wisely

Time to exercise and good health

salvation of his roommate Jeewan

Wisdom to know which activities to be involved in and which to not do at this time.

Thank you so much for standing with us during this important season as our first arrow is launched! We praise God for His goodness and mercy!

Love in Christ,

Brad, Marcy, Christopher, Matthew, Hannah, Mary and JoJo

If you want to see pictures of our journey feel free to click on this link:

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150280222708443.326375.575833442&type=1>