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KATIE'S KORNER

NEWS FROM EQUADOR

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A Call to the Church



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First of all, I want to apologize for the delay in getting this letter out. I want you to know that I have struggled to write this newsletter because God has been burdening my heart with some pretty big things, but I have been unsure of how to share them. But at the risk of sounding "preachy" I know I need to share my heart, because I know He wants me to do it.

There is so much going on in the world. We are living in a time where it isn't "safe" or acceptable to have convictions anymore. There is constant opposition against Christ's bride, His church, world-wide. It seems that every time I read the news, I am reminded of the verse in 2 Timothy, chapter 3, where Paul warns Timothy, saying,

"But know this: difficult times will come in the last days. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, without love for what is good, traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to the form of godliness but denying its power."
(HCSB)

And then I look at that list and it acts as a test to examine my own heart. As true Christ-followers, we don't have the luxury of living for ourselves. We are called to live for so much more. We are called to die to self, to die to these desires. The thing that strikes me in all this is in verse 5, people "holding the form of godliness but denying its power." The New Living Translation of the Bible puts it this way: "They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly." This seems to me like a warning about what will happen in the church. People who don't call themselves Christians have no need to act "religious" or godly. So this chapter acts like a check for me, and I think it should act as a check for the church. Jesus wants certain characteristics in His bride.

When the shooting at the Community College in Oregon occurred, and I heard about the question that the shooter posed to people with a gun to their heads, "Are you a Christian?" my first thought was, *would I say yes? Would I profess my undying love for my Savior in the face of death?* I haven't been in that situation but I pray that I would have boldness to say yes. But then I read an article about various cases of people who believe in God but are ashamed to admit it. Being a Christ-follower is no longer the popular or easy path. Society and popular culture seem to be screaming at the church and the voices are getting louder every day. This will not go away and we can't withdraw and play it safe. The world needs to see Christ-followers who rise up and passionately but boldly live out of the truth, love, justice, grace, and mercy of Jesus. In our workplaces we need to start living out our Christian life. At home, we need to be Jesus. This is something that I know we have heard so many times. Heidi drilled this idea into us in youth group for years. But it's a reminder we can't hear often enough. If someone only knows that I am Christian because of my Facebook page or the bumper sticker on the back of my car, but my actions do not emulate those of Christ, then I need to reevaluate my life. I need to take a long look at my heart. And can you imagine what our homes, towns, and workplaces would look like if people could see Jesus living in us through our actions, through our interactions, through our love? We are not perfect, but God holds us to pretty high standards. (1 Peter 1:16)

To wrap up, I had a conversation with a co-worker today. She was encouraging me and challenging me at the same time. She said, "Katie, you are getting to the point in your life where God is preparing you for marriage. But He won't share His place in your heart. God is going to be pruning and refining you in this time so that you are the woman HE needs you to be." She told me about how, before she and her husband were married, she loved him very

much, but God clearly spoke to her and said, "Your love for your husband is stronger than your love for Me." She didn't listen, and God took her husband away, out of the country, for a year and a half. They are now married 15 years and have a wonderful, Christ-centered marriage. But God is not willing to share His throne.

As the world we live in gets darker and scarier, we don't have to fear because God said this would happen. It's part of God's plan of redemption. But Christ's return for His BRIDE is imminent as well, and He WILL NOT share the throne of His bride's heart! Are we the bride that Jesus desires? Are we being filled with His truth, love, grace, and mercy to then be able to empty ourselves as we live out Christ to the broken world around us? Are we united for His glory or ours? Do we come together to give Him praise or to elevate our own successes? Are we encouraging one another to live our lives differently and set apart? I just encourage you to take some time to search your heart in prayer, just as God has taught me that I need to do day in and day out. We have a calling and a purpose for living that is so much greater than what we can imagine, and when lived out for His glory, can change lives and bring healing.

"Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to Him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen. Therefore I, as a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God."
Eph. 3:20-4:1

What's Going on in Quito?

In My Classroom:

I am teaching 5th and 6th grade English Language Arts (ELA) this year and 5th grade Bible. It's quite the jump from 2nd grade, but I love it! My ELA classes contain all the students with Specialized Education Plans within the Special Education department. That has been a joy and a challenge. Many of these kids are struggling with ADHD, impulsivity, and learning disabilities that affect their reading. And on top of learning obstacles, they have difficult situations at home that they bring with them each day. It makes for a very...entertaining classroom. But I also see it as an amazing opportunity to love on these kids and be Christ to them this year. I love writing (if you can't tell) and I am hoping to be able to instill in them a love for reading and writing. There is so much power in the

written word and I want them to grasp that. We have been looking at word choice in writing. I have been trying to remind them that their words are valuable and important. They have power in their words. The words we choose, either spoken or written, can build up or tear down. I have this poster hanging in my classroom, right up front:

Before you speak:

T H I N K

T = Is it True?
H = Is it Helpful?
I = Is it Inspiring?
N = Is it Necessary?
K = Is it Kind?

Sometimes, all I need to do is point to it. It's all the reminder they need to hold themselves and one another accountable for their words. I have also been challenged myself. If I am holding my kids to this standard, then shouldn't I be holding myself to this standard too?

In Bible, I am blessed to have the curriculum plan written by last year's teacher. We will look at the Bible as a continuous story. We are spending the first two months laying the building blocks. As a class, we are digesting and mastering five themes we find weaved in all throughout the Bible - God chooses to work through people with a **humble heart**; God chooses a group of people and a leader to be a picture of the coming **King and Kingdom**; through His power, God sends a **rescuer** and makes a way to save and deliver His people; the act of buying us back from the sin, death and destruction that we all chose in the Garden of Eden, or **redemption**; and God uses **lands and** people to renew the Broken Relationship by **dwelling** among people. If you can't tell, I am so excited about Bible this year. My 5th graders love that they are learning something new about the Bible, and as their Bible teacher, I love that, too!

We are starting kindness clubs at school to encourage student-initiated outreach within the school. As the 5th and 6th graders will soon be heading off to middle school, we want to help develop in them a desire to serve others. As this is the first year we will be doing this, I am sure it will be messy but I am praying that it brings glory to God. I am also heading up a girls' Bible study for any 5th grade girls who want to take part. We are meeting during lunch once a week and fellowshiping together. So far, there are 12 girls signed up. We had our first "girls group" last week and I am excited to see how God will move in their lives throughout this year.

At my church:

I am attending a new church, La Viña, and heading up

Sunday school for our new English service. I love being able to see God work in the little ones, especially now that my students are older. Sometimes it is exhausting to have taught kids Monday through Friday, and then to have to do it again on Sunday, but God is giving me the strength I need. It is exciting to see the little church growing. When I starting going in April, there were maybe 80 people on a Sunday. Now there are at least 200 people between the English and Spanish services. We are looking at the idea of starting another Spanish service because we can't fit more people in the church!

In Ecuador:

There has been much talk of the volcano, Cotopaxi, recently. No one can say when it will erupt. The glacier on top is melting due to the rising level of the magma.

Here in Quito, we will be fine. Because of its position in the mountains, Quito will not be affected directly by the lava, mud slides, or pyroclastic flows. If and when Cotopaxi erupts, it most likely will affect our drinkable water supply and electricity for a few days, so we have a ton of drinking water stored up here at the house.



Depending on the direction of the wind, we could get ash fall here in the city as well, so we have all purchased our masks, goggles, and ponchos, which are all set and ready to go. As a school we have been practicing our emergency procedures for what we will do if there is an eruption while we are in school. I feel safe and prepared here in Quito. If the volcano does erupt, though, please be praying for the For His Children Orphanage in the town of Latacunga. It is in the "red zone" of the volcano and is home to 32 physically handicapped precious children and teenagers. It is on higher ground and they have an agreement with the government here, but it would be very difficult to evacuate the children due to each of their individual situations.

With the onset of rainy season, the country is also facing the reality of it being an El Niño year. That means lots of rain for us and probable flooding of most of the coastal region of Ecuador. Today it hailed for 10 minutes straight and poured here for all of the afternoon and into the night. All of that is soaking into the ground right now because it has been a dry summer, but soon it will start running off and down into the rivers that run out through the coast. That water, in addition to the rain they will receive, could prove to be very problematic for the small fishing towns along the coast.

Please pray for order in the face of whatever natural disasters we could be facing, and that the peace of God would fill people's hearts.

Joining Me Here in Quito

If you would like to join me in my ministry here in Quito, there are a few different ways that you can.

First, I always need your constant prayers. Specifically, I need prayers that I would keep my eyes fixed on the Lord. It is so easy to get overwhelmed here and lose sight of my purpose and ministry here. It can be draining working day in and day out with these classes. It is easy to let grading pile up and to view this as "any other teaching job" when I know it is so much more than that. Please pray that God would not let me get comfortable here, but that I would be attentive to His guidance, His calling, and His direction.

Second, you can partner with me financially through RCE (Resourcing Christian Educators). They are my sending organization and an amazing one at that. That money is used to cover monthly expenses, airfare home, and classroom resources, as well as any emergency, medical or otherwise, that may come up. I am so very thankful for the financial support I receive! If you would like to support me financially, you can download and fill out the form by [CLICKING HERE](#). You can choose to make a one-time donation, or to make it regular, monthly or yearly.

Finally, you can come down with a missions team. I know of some wonderful ministries and organizations here, my school included, that are always open to having missions teams come and visit. If that is something that interests you, please feel free to contact me and I can help you get started!

Thank you for all your love and support. Knowing that I have a family back home that is there praying for me is such a comfort here. It made coming back that much harder this year, which I know is a blessing. I enjoyed my summer with family and friends so much and thank you all for making it such a wonderful time.

Blessings in Christ,

Katie

Stay Connected

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