

December 2015

Risks and Rewards

During this time of growth and transition at Partners in Hope (PIH), I've tried to start my week with an early morning exercise swim at the kids' school, and a prayer walk at the Wildlife Center trail here in town. The trail runs alongside the Lingadzi River, and the sounds of the river, the birds and the crickets make it hard to believe I'm in the center of town. It's a great place to clear my mind and listen to God. This morning was the 6th time that I've come across an ~8 foot crocodile just alongside the path. I was shocked the first time I saw him and realized that I had just walked past that spot 10 minutes earlier, oblivious to his presence. Needless to say, I am much more alert as I take my walk...excited more than afraid.



A few months ago I was taking this prayer walk before an important meeting and got "pooped on" by a monkey watching me from high in the trees. I had to rush home to change my shirt for the meeting. I see these walks as a metaphor of working in Malawi, surrounded by the amazing beauty of God's creation, aware of the risks that come with the path that I have chosen. Sometimes I get "pooped on", sometimes I just avoid getting "eaten", but it is the path that God has me on.

One fear that creeps into my thoughts sometimes is that, as we work toward expanding PIH to a full-service teaching and research hospital, we are somehow just building a "house of cards" that could easily crumble someday. Sustainable development in Africa is a HUGE challenge with great risk for failure. Then I remember the many times in scripture where God says, "do not be afraid". It is usually accompanied by an assurance that "God will be with us".

When the angel visited Mary and told her His plan, she was certainly afraid and must have been overwhelmed by the task He had laid out for her. The angel's message was, "do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God." All that was required of Mary was obedience. "I am the Lord's servant, may your word to me be fulfilled". (Luke 1)

When we align our will and our plans to the Lord, we need not be afraid. God will certainly be with us and work His plan through us. May the Lord bless you, your families and your work this Christmas and in the New Year ahead.

Perry for the Jansen and PIH Family

