



## **My Path...**

**I hope this letter finds you well. I would like to open this first letter to those who resonate with the ministry of Ad Fontes by quoting the psalmist when he exclaims, “my times are in your hands...” I have come to realize that there is a pace, a rhythm, a rhyme, and a reason for the things Kelly and I experience. My path so far has been full, engaging, stimulating, and quite gut wrenching to be honest. There has been contact here in Norman with those who are both curious and in great pain. New environments, new conversations, and new questions now fill my head and heart with possibilities about the future.**

### **HANGIN’ WITH THE ACADEMY**

**I probably get to read at least three books a week while writing three or four papers on those books per week. From Miracles to Feminism to Eugenics, the emphasis here at a traditional university seems to be on quantity of information and a large survey of issues rather than mastery of seminal material. I have taken on this pace and been able to keep up fairly well. I commend the education I received at DTS through men like Dr. Kreider and appreciate your prayers from week to week. I have struggled with the nature of the work and the community of the Academy. So far, much of it seems fairly introverted, loaded with jargon and sometimes quite anti-social. I am confident that I will earn at least the Masters and will look ahead to the Doctorate when that time comes, but I find within myself new applications for such an education. Perhaps there is room for a new type of discipleship school, theological training, or ecclesiastical ministry if not entrance into the university or seminary. As a**

point of update, I have been blessed with the opportunity to do real research for a book that will be published in 2009 by collaborating with a senior geophysicist on locating ancient documents to display in his comprehensive work. It is a rare experience for someone so new to all of this!

### **STRIVING FOR NEW MINISTRY**

As for service to others, the struggle to feel comfortable in a new situation has been a slow going process. It is indeed true that I cannot disciple books! So, I look forward to beginning a new position with Marketplace Chaplains and maybe even get to mix ministry and academics with a business professor who is interested in exploring spirituality in the workplace. Ad Fontes has been able to receive and channel funds to send me to Russia to minister to the orphans I got to meet last year. Quite honestly, stuff like this has caused me to think about my own motives and what I want out of life. In regards to church ministry, I have thought that perhaps I am responding to past hurts. Lyrics from a song by the former band Creed speak truthfully by sharing "They're not here anymore, no need to settle no score. We all live under the reign of one King." I am trying to do what is right and move towards what I should be doing and not act out from a pain that is irrelevant at this point. As I have said, I am interested in being a disciple as in making disciples. So I ask you for your prayers since I am curious as to what the Spirit of God will do with me during my time here.

Overall, it is true that the thirst for knowledge isn't limited to those who attend the right schools. The caricature of American evangelicals as incurious and indifferent to learning is false. A visit to any Christian bookstore will show you that they are gluttons for learning – of a certain kind. The thirst for knowledge undoes them. Like so many Americans, they know little about history, science, secular literature, or foreign cultures. The thirst for answers from urgent questions prompts a grab for the only glass in the room: God's revealed Word. This is something that I want to remedy in myself and what has attracted me to all of you in our friendship. As a fellowship of friends, I wonder what you think about the fact that if the average Jesus freak knows just as much about theology as the average pop star knows about musical history, would we be justified in asking what relation American folk religion bears to biblical Christianity? When people I minister to at a job site or those I study with in the university speak of "Christianity", I have to wonder what they are thinking of. I hope you didn't mind me sharing all of this with you, but I do not

**share it with you because I am self-centered, but rather that I trust you with my thoughts and ask for your wisdom in our fellowship.**

*All Nature is but Art unknown to thee;  
All chance direction, which thou canst not see;  
All discord, harmony not understood;  
All partial evil, universal good:  
And spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,  
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.*

- Alexander Pope

**We miss you and look forward to getting to catch up and see you soon!**

***JB***