MISSIONARY SUPPORT: BEING SUPPORTED

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Category: Christian Life

Recently, I've written a few posts about missionary support which have been rather theoretical. This one brings the subject home and talks about some of our experiences. This is something I've touched on before; for example here.

What Is Good About the System?

The great thing about being a supported missionary is that you know that you have a group of people who care about you, about what you do and who are praying for you and dipping into their pockets each month to keep you going. When things get tough, or when difficult decisions have to be made it isÂ very reassuring to have this sort of backup.

What Is Bad About the System?

It really would be nice to receive a regular-ish sum of money each month. Budgeting is not easy when your income is far from regular. That being said, it is amazing how often we have received a major gift just at the point when we needed to pay for an expensive repair or bit of equipment. In the end, God, through the generosity of his people, has not let us down.

What Do We Do Badly?

We aren't very good at visiting our supporters and keeping in personal contact. We are aware of this and know we need to do better, but it really isn't something we are very good at. Strangely enough, we find this far more difficult now that we live in the UK, where theoretically it should be easier, than when we were based in Africa. We are pretty good at electronic communication; we keep this blog and we send out regular newsletters (sign up here) but that doesn't replace face-to-face contact.

Money Is a Concern

The truth is that we in the 31 years that we have been living on support, we've always had enough money to cover our needs. There have been a few hairy moments, but overall things have gone well. However as time is going on and we get older, so do our supporters. We are aware that a number of people who have given to us are reaching retirement age and will need to cut down, or even stop their giving. One of the paradoxes of missionary life is that as you get older, more experienced and take on senior roles, your income is likely to drop. Equally, though this does not affect us now, it can be extremely difficult for people just starting out on their missionary career to raise the requisite support for their role.

If you'd like to know more about how you can support our work, either as a one off or long term, you can find more information here.