

# The Tozour Times

## News from 2013

### ***Looking Back on Our Year***

Twenty years have now passed since we entered into itinerant evangelism. Our oldest child Briana, a senior in high school, has matured into a sweet young woman. Heather (14) is a tremendous helper at home and has grown to 6'1"! Our little Lanae (3), is a delight to us all (most of the time! ☺). Michael and Candace have now traveled with us for nine years, and we wouldn't know what to do without their music and children's ministry!

In the past year, we have traveled to twenty states and have ministered in forty churches. We've seen over a hundred professions of faith, many assurances of salvation, and loads of spiritual decisions of various kinds. I spoke in two camps and ministered for two days at West Coast Baptist College in November. Michael conducted a couple of week-long vacation Bible schools and preached in some camps, as well.



### ***Looking Up from Troubles***



While the Lord promised to be with us **in** troubles, He never said He would keep us **from** troubles. In Job, we read that “man is born up to trouble, as the sparks fly upward.” (Job 5:7) Peter wrote, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings...” (1 Peter 4:12, 13)

This has been a season of trials. When we left our home base in August, we had a wheel come off the trailer in Kansas. We lost the wheel, the tire, and the wheel hub assembly. With replacement parts being immediately unavailable, we left our trailer at a nearby church and drove on to Colorado in our truck. Five days later, I drove back to Kansas after the service one night. A few hours of sleep and a few more making repairs, and I was set to drive five hours back to Colorado with our trailer in tow, making it there in time to preach! Counting parts and fuel, that first mishap of the fall cost us over \$1,500.

Our second vehicle problem came in October in Sacramento. A tire tread peeled off and beat up the trailer. With no spare due to our previous trouble, we spent two hours waiting for a replacement tire. Trailer and tire damage were around \$2,000.

A week later, in a borrowed a vehicle, we headed into San Francisco for Heather’s fourteenth birthday. Having stopped at a Denny’s for brunch, I returned to the vehicle to get something. The back window of the Jeep Liberty had been smashed out! Stolen goods included a Canon camera and lenses (\$1,100 value), my study Bible, my devotional journal, and a biography of Hudson Taylor. We felt mortified, especially because the vehicle was not our own!

On a positive note, we prayed earnestly that the Lord would allow us to get back at least the irreplaceable items. The next day, I got a call from a fellow burglary victim. In searching the property near his car, he found my backpack and book bag with the Bible, journal, clothes, and biography (only the camera was missing)! The man turned over my stuff to the police, and we were able to recover the goods by week’s end.

After spending a couple of days in Phoenix with our niece Leslie, we headed off to do meetings in New Mexico. Traveling up Interstate 17, we were flagged by a passing motorist. Looking in the mirror, I saw smoke coming from our tires. The culprit was a broken leaf spring! I carry a spare spring, so I tried to replace it myself. The problem was, I only had one jack; I needed at least two. Youth Pastor Andrew Novack (Cornerstone Baptist in Scottsdale, AZ) came to my rescue. Andrew spent all afternoon and thirteen hours the next day helping me with the leaf spring job! It turned out that

we replaced three springs. The two tires that rubbed together would also have to be replaced (\$350 each). Due to snow moving in to the Flagstaff area while we were delayed, we had to miss going to our entire meeting with our friends, the Foerstes. (Thankfully, Michael and Candace were able to get there and do the meeting themselves.). How grateful we are that the Lord kept us safe and gave us help. Cornerstone Baptist even provided us a nice house to stay in during our delay and provided us with a financial gift to help with repairs.

The trials were burdensome and costly, we admit. But we were reminded that Scripture says, “**In everything** give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). The Word also teaches that Spirit-filled Christians are characterized by “giving thanks **always** for **all things**” (Ephesians 5:20). As each new problem occurred, we would pause first to **thank** the Lord for the difficulty that had come our way. God has promised that all things work together for good to them that love Him (Romans 8:28). From a monetary perspective, it seems like a great waste of money that the Lord let us endure. But He sees money much differently than we. Kids often think that their parents are wasting money spent on their schooling, but the parents see it as an investment in essential education. In like manner, God sees our material losses as an investment in our spiritual education. We must learn to look at life through the “thank lens” instead of grumbling when troubles come our way.

### **Looking Ahead with Expectancy (and Some Reserve)**



Briana will graduate in the spring and head off to college next fall, the Lord willing. She has been actively involved in our children’s ministry, and she is our firstborn child: need I say that she will be dearly missed! I’ve asked her to sum up her senior year so far and to talk about her plans for the future. Here is her update:

“I never would have thought that I would be a senior this quickly! Time seems to go by faster each year, but this year especially has seemed to fly by. I had been praying that my senior year would be full of great memories, adventures, and fun with my family. Our fall started off in

Colorado where I had the privilege to hike two 14,000-foot mountains with my dad, uncle, and two cousins. At the time it seemed like I was going to die, but I was glad when we had finished and I could sleep for two days! Our western tour included five national parks: Rocky Mountain, Yellowstone, Glacier, Sequoia, and Yosemite. I have had some of my favorite memories at the national parks, especially Yosemite and Yellowstone; so it was great to be able to re-visit them and make new memories. For Heather’s birthday we were able to take a side-trip into San Francisco for a day! We did most of the usual tourist attractions



such as the cable cars, Ghirardelli Square, Fisherman’s Wharf, Postcard Row, and the Golden Gate Bridge; but I got to have a new experience because my amazing, adventurous dad agreed to let me drive down Lombard Street (the most crooked street in the world)—that was exciting! Although we also had some trials that day, it was a fun trip that we will never forget. God has definitely answered my prayer for a memorable and adventure-filled senior year. It has been a fantastic fall with so many good memories along the way!

“I know the big question that everyone wants to know is ‘Where are you going to college?’ Well, after years of praying and weighing the pros and cons, I have decided on Pensacola Christian College to major in graphic design. I am willing to do whatever God wants with my life; and since He has given me some ability with art, we believe, at least for now, that this is what I am supposed to be doing. I would love to be able to use the skills I learn in college to serve in a ministry. Although I am not sure what God’s plan for my life is yet, I am just trusting and following Him as He leads me step-by-step.”



Thank you for praying for us throughout the year. Would you please continue to do so in 2014; we need faithful intercessors. We are in the process of updating our website ([tozourministries.org](http://tozourministries.org)); so, please, check in soon. We’ll give periodic updates there. The Lord bless you all as you walk with Him in the coming year!