



Dear Friend,

Oct 4th, 2013

I last wrote in early 2013 when I resigned from Epic Movement. Since then, the season has been characterized by a deeper surrendering of our past, better embracing of our present circumstances, and trusting God with our futures. I am brimming to share all that God has done through this season.

Serving on staff with Epic Movement is now in my past. But I still serve Epic through projects here and there. For example, I was asked to fly to LA to help train interns reaching Asian and Latino American students. But since I could not travel, I instead offered to record a training video covering hours of training material tailor-made for these interns. I felt a little fearful that the video might flop, mostly because it was THREE HOURS LONG of me talking; that's longer than the epic movies Titanic or Ghandi, and they had special effects! But 500 miles away while the video was being shown, I received several surprise text messages from Epic leaders that the video was very well-received by the interns. In addition to that project, I continue to offer urban training through my now infamous Chinatown alley tours. I gave tours to Epic and also to two local seminary classes this past summer. I'm an informal consultant to Epic and I'm still coaching one more new Epic San Francisco staff member. I'm thankful to continue to partner with Epic. **But I do miss my partnership with you through prayer and these newsletters.** For you were behind EVERYTHING God had accomplished through the years.

The idea of planting a church is now in the past. This effort was going at full-steam a few months ago with key ingredients at bay: I've been mentoring people, evangelizing the unchurched, and I had denominational, church, and local pastoral support. The idea of church planting is usually regarded as quite the stressful endeavor, not the ideal match for any family given our limitations (my wife's health, "dad" duties, my son's special needs, my parent's health). But I had engineered "out of box" ideas to manage the stress, got the OK with the plan from the denomination, and really thought it could work. But after prayer and a time to assess if God is calling us this way, the idea of church planting was surrendered. The assessment [process](#) has served its end; and I've personally grown much from the experience.

The present saw an explosion of evangelism. My wife and I have always had a [lifestyle of evangelism](#), but recently my evangelical efforts have been [unprecedented in scope](#). I have been befriending musicians, tobacco smokers, & literature freaks in the local cafe and more. This has spawned dozens of spiritual conversations, often several at the same time, and often accompanied by someone I'm mentoring. Out of this effort, I started a Bible Study for non-Christians in the local cafe.

The present has also seen much progress in my new commercial sales work with [NHance](#). The work has been hard (starting from scratch) and entrepreneurial (because we are the first franchise with commercial salespeople). The pay (100% commission) is not yet able to pay our bills, but the work has been tremendously formative to my soul as I'm learning to stretch people's imaginations, navigate tensions, and lead clients to think long-term. I'm learning to do all these as Jesus would instead of acting from a place of shame like I've done in the past. In fact, much of the "new nerve" I've acquired to evangelize comes from the "Kingdom" skills I'm learning at this job.

As I've been grieving losses this season, many too obscure to articulate here, I've also **begun to experience the treasures that have come out of this season of loss.** These treasures include greater simplicity, more authentic relationships, but most of all, the treasure of a renewed journey of discovering who I am in God's eyes, and replacing lies about myself I've believed in for years with a truth that has uncapped a new reservoir of hopes, desires, and dreams. And this is having a direct impact of how I'm trusting God for the future.

PAST

PRESENT

I have been asking God tons of questions about my future. “Secular or ministry work?...What is God preparing that will provide for my family, with no travel, and flexible enough for servicing family medical or school emergencies?...What should I do with all the ministry training and dozens and dozens of invaluable church and ministry partners? Are you asking me to surrender all those too?” I felt ministry was in my eventual future, but I did not want to shortchange [the healing](#) that came from the “fasting” of ministry this past season.

Then the answer came from an unlikely source. A non-Christian career coach I’ve befriended had me write down my ambitions as an exercise, as if I were applying for a job. After doing so, my soul’s floodgates opened in fresh ways. From that exercise came this picture of my future job: **To advocate for the Kingdom redemption of the Asian American story, in order to help fill the greatest needs of Asian American discipleship and evangelism.**

Encouragement from close colleagues, saying “that’s you!”, pushed me over the top to **launch this startup ministry**. To see that picture come to fruition, here are five ways I will see my time divided:

- one part **missionary to my community** - The evangelism I shared about [earlier](#) needs to continue, even grow, for me to stay grounded in reality, to keep my apologetic and relational skills fresh, and to provide an important component to my mentoring ministry.
- one part **commercial salesman** - This & the previous bullet form the backbone of the ministry to help keep me and anything I teach out of the “ivory tower” and rooted in the daily grind of life, just as Jesus would.
- one part **networker** - Scholars, local church practitioners, pastors, & parachurch ministers I already partner with form the relational conduits by which content is birthed, shaped, tested, & delivered to local lay people.
- one part **minister** - I will hand-select which venues (leadership training, preaching, etc.) to maximize my contributions. I will also continue to be a consultant & mentor to veteran and church-planting pastors.
- one part **advocate for Asian American Christianity** - I will continue to read, research, and speak to raise the awareness and blessing that Asian American voices can contribute to the Body of Christ. During my time with Epic Movement, we had tremendous opportunities to serve many leaders outside Asian circles.

This new endeavor represents everything I’ve been doing in my spare time. But now it will be my main focus. because I believe this unique mix will be the most significant contribution I can make to the Body of Christ. It’s also the most unique contribution as all my [training, experience, skills, and networks are coming together](#), counterbalancing yet building on each other, for maximum Kingdom effect. But perhaps more importantly, this startup allows me to set up healthy boundaries so I can continue to heal and to love and serve my family.

Job accountability will come from my closest ministry colleagues and prayer partners, all very reputable pastors. Financial accountability will come from a local church board pastored by one of my prayer partners. I’ve set up a salary cap; anything I don’t make from my sales job will come from tax-deductible donations and gifts. In my next correspondence to you, I will invite you to partner with this new endeavor. But don’t wait until then if you want to [email](#) me.

I’ve also started a new [blog](#) to expand ideas in this letter and to act as a “resting place” for some of the things I’ve been working on.

Thanks for reading!