



theWheatley Word

August 2008

Hello, Dear Friends! It's me, Catherine, this month. We are about to come full circle, seeing what every season of a year holds for us here in Athens. Right now we have a little time to reflect and rest, as the city is a ghost-town while Greeks enjoy island vacations. Our new teammates arrive in mid-September and university classes begin again in October.

A Year in Review You get the monthly play by play, but now we can step back and look at the year as a whole. This year was full of unexpected surprises, slow at times and rushed at others, with moments full of hope and excitement and others with wondering and confusion. Living in a foreign country takes a great deal of mental effort just to go to the grocery store, but pioneering takes even more effort, trying to glean meaning from every observation, comment and even silence. Many days I've just felt like my mind was exhausted and the things each of us learned didn't always add up! We couldn't jump to conclusions too quickly, and instead we just kept track of our observations.

Walking on campus, I never knew what I would encounter. Some girls walked away as soon as I opened my mouth. Other girls were chatty, promising to get together again for coffee. While I've shared stories of promising conversations and times when I felt like I really connected with girls, there haven't been many follow-up stories to tell. Relationships are going much more slowly than I anticipated. As I walk on campus these days, I have no idea what is going on in the heart of the student I'm about to approach. She could have questions about God, not knowing who to ask, or be feeling trapped, disillusioned by the church, longing for more. I never know, so the search goes on.

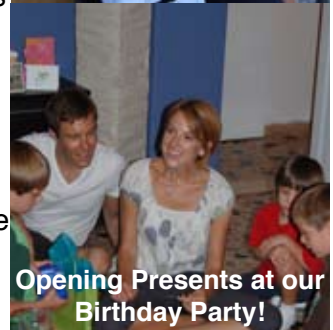
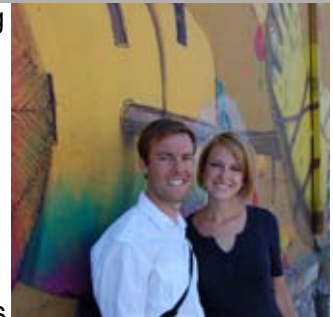
It's Not Chinese to Me! Most of my friends are surprised when I tell them Chinese is easier than Greek. You may be too. After one year of learning Chinese, I could understand most "How are you?" conversations, share about myself, find what I needed shopping, and even bargain pretty well! In Greek, however, I am struggling. I can read the alphabet, but I can't say much more than what you'd learn in a basic phrasebook. I'm really hoping things will click this next year as we pursue some different classes. When we first came to Greece for one week, we sensed a pervasive hopelessness that broke our hearts. After one year, we still pray that God would grant Greeks hope in Christ. We also pray He will open their eyes to see Christ as revealed in His Word and in His people, rather than as portrayed by a church they no longer trust. We desperately desire for Greeks to see their value and identity as determined by God, rather than searching for significance in promiscuous experiences. When we ask college students what they long for, they answer, "Freedom," namely, the ability to do whatever they want, whenever they want. We pray they will find freedom, redefined as humble submission in an entirely secure relationship with God.

Saying Hello in Arabic Often Paul and I are amazed at the unique opportunities we have here. We've loved serving the refugees who come through Athens, with food and clothing. Last month, we mentioned Mike from Iraq translating for Paul. In his first year in Athens, he came to know Christ and asked Paul to teach him and another Iraqi friend Aram about the Bible. Right now, Paul is sitting at a coffee shop with them, reading the Gospel of John.

Twelve Months of Thanks We are so blessed to have you on our team, upholding us as we continue to pursue Greeks with the truth and hope of the Gospel. It's an exciting frontier we are on, though many challenges face us, and we carry on with faith and hope knowing whom we serve. **Thanks for all your prayers!**



*Paul
&
Catherine*



Opening Presents at our Birthday Party!



Paul with Mike, from Iraq

Please pray...

- that God would lead us to freshmen, hungry for God's hope.
- for us to learn how to communicate better in Greek.
- that we could effectively follow-up all the students that the summer project met.

It's Greek to Us!

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