The Next Steppe

Not Yet

“What is that funky smell?!” In certain parts of Asia, there is a fruit called durian. Though loved by many local people, durian tends to create an unpleasant experience for outsiders. The smell is such that many buses and hotels have signs banning durian from their premises. After tasting a durian-flavored frozen treat, John and I struggled to identify the odor, which we both remembered had something to do with his first year in vet practice. We finally recognized the scent as the same as what emanates from a cow’s udder infected with very toxic bacteria (in the same family as the bug that causes botulism)!

In discussing the durian phenomenon with some friends who are living in SE Asia, Bill said that when he is asked if he likes durian, he replies, “Not yet.” This is his standard reply when asked about any experience which is counter to his American or individual sensibilities…” not yet.” What a great sentiment and attitude!

“No” states objectionability, but “not yet” allows for acceptability in others, and (maybe eventually) in ourselves. “No” shuts the door, but “not yet” leaves it open for possible change. “No,” says, “This is me, end of the story,” but “Not yet,” says, “I am at this spot, but it is temporary because God is working in my life” (Philippians 1:6).

“Not yet” is hopeful and leaves room for Holy Spirit to change us.

As a believer and follower of Christ, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, which is the same power that raised Christ from the dead (Ephesians 1:19-20). If that is true, then why do so many of us say,

“There’s no way I can…

...get out of debt

...get everything is done before Christmas

...say good-bye to such-and-such, etc.,”

when Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6)? Why do we say,

“I could never…

...share Christ with my family

...live overseas

...forgive so-and-so, etc.”

when Jesus said, “with God all things are possible.” (Matt 19:26b)
I know I have sometimes shut the door on the possibility of God working in my life by negative attitudes. Let’s open up to the amazing possibilities for our lives when we are focused on and directed by an all-loving, all-powerful Father. Let’s all commit this year to be “not yet” people!

John and I will be in Asia for almost the whole month of January. We will be participating in a CVM retreat of long-term workers for about a week in SE Asia. Then we will be in Mongolia for almost 2 weeks of meeting future teammates and checking out the city and dairy area. We will be looking at the availability of household items in the city (so we know what to bring and what to buy there), and if weather cooperates, hopefully getting a first-hand look at the newer dairies, again to know what equipment, references, etc., to take with us and what areas for which to begin developing training.

**Praises:**

- A great 12-day friend-raising road trip in November (No.CA, OR, WA, No.ID): 2900 miles and 25 wonderful visits
- KayLee’s engagement to a wonderful Christian young man (big date is June 6)

**Prayer requests:**

- for good travels, domestically and internationally
- for the weather to permit us to visit the dairy region in Mongolia
- for good beginnings to new relationships with Mongolian and ex-pat teammates
- to reach our full monthly support quickly so we can focus on our last training, family, and disposition of belongings, etc. (we are around 50%)
- for the Mongolian people to have open hearts to the Good News

Blessings,
Laurie (and John)