




Rodgers in Asia

Jul-Aug 2016

Serving with  Word of Life Korea

When You Grow Up: Being a Mommy

“What do you want to do when you grow up?” The question was asked of me often as a child.

“Um, maybe a teacher/nurse/artist?” My answer would change often because I had many interests. The most honest answer would have been just “I don’t know.” I never felt passionately drawn to any area. I just couldn’t see myself going to work every day. It was only in the last five years have I discovered what I really want to be when I grow up. I want to be a mother. Not just any mother. **I want to raise kids who love God and go out into the world with a passion to serve Him.**

As I write this my 8 month old Estelle is nestled in my lap and Loralyn (3) and Paul (2) are out on a Daddy-Kid play date. I’m typing at arms length to keep little fingers from reaching the keys. Our house is full of the evidences of children and their needs. With so many small humans along, our family often draws eyes when we go out. **This will only grow** when we move to South Korea.

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We went to TN to celebrate Paul’s second birthday (July 7) and our 7 year anniversary (July 11). Staring out at the mountains we were reminded of the landscape of Busan, Korea where 8 out of 10 people are atheists or buddhists. We hope that our marriage and family life is not just typified by travel but also a passion for the Lord and the lost.

Many countries have a birth rate that is lower than the necessary replacement rate of 2.1 children per woman. **South Korea currently ranks as one of the lowest** at 1.2. This puts the country on a very alarming path toward having the oldest population in the world by 2045.

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The Stout family welcomed us back into their home so that we could share about our ministry at Bethel Bible Church on July 31. We were so impressed by the intentionality the Stout's displayed in their family life. The church embraced us and showered generosity and love. It was such a blessing to see the priorities these families modeled to others.

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All you have to do is search for information on “South Korean birth rate” and slews of information pop up. I don’t have the space to reference all the reasons why this is the case, but some of the main ones have to do with the push for the women work and establish a good career in their 20s, before considering marriage. Unlike the United States if a young Korean woman were to stop climbing the career ladder to start a family, it would be close to impossible to get back on. **The younger generation doesn’t feel the need to have children as much as a successful career.** It is a serious problem that the government is struggling to address.

Most of the ideas for solving the problem involve public funded daycare, tax breaks and other government structured programs. My heart is that our family will point the way toward **the precious value of children, far above a career.** The focus of the youth and family structure needs to change. Hearts need to change. This is a very counter-cultural message. Our family will stand out in Korea in many ways, among those, the number of children we have (and more we hope in the future). We often say that we are going to do *ministry as a family*. As I think about living my life for Christ, **I choose to invest myself and resources into the children God has given us.** Each a unique eternal soul, with unlimited potential for God to use in building His kingdom.



We watched the Vance's children (our sending church's pastoral family) so they could get away to the same place in TN for their anniversary. They have been so devoted to family and ministry that they haven't had a retreat in years. It is our desire to be the same type of encouragement to hard working pastors and their families in South Korea.