

SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ~Matthew 6:33

April showers... bring May devastation

As you may have seen on the news, the last weekend of April was marked by very severe storms in our area of East Texas. On Saturday evening multiple tornados touched down around the city of Canton, which is about 15 miles from the GFA campus. These tornados caused a massive amount of damage. A few days later we were driving past the area and were shocked to see the swath of destruction about 1/3 mile wide. We are grateful

to the Lord for His protection over us and over GFA - we did lose power for 2 full days, but compared to what others experienced this was only a temporary inconvenience.

These storms actually made it into news headlines around the world; Rob was talking with staff in our New Zealand support office and they mentioned that they heard about the Canton tornados in the news.

Although the damage and loss was significant, it was also amazing to see the Lord's grace in the events of the weekend. None of the tornados touched down in the city of Canton, just in the rural areas around it. This is very significant because when the storms took place it was First Monday weekend, which is a monthly city-wide flea market that brings in tens of thousands of shoppers. But because the path of the tornados was outside of town there was very little loss of life.

Just on our own campus, it was beautiful to see how people went out of



Rebecca had the opportunity to go help with some of the relief work, doing food prep with an emergency response group called Mercy Chefs

their way to help each other - whether by checking in on neighbors, serving on the brigade to provide generator power to refrigerators, or hosting friends to share meals, there was definitely a spirit of unity among us.



One of our friends who went to help with clean-up, standing in the remains of a house



Other events of note

Besides twisters and power outages, we've had several other activities going on. It always amazes me how quickly our calendar of events fills up!

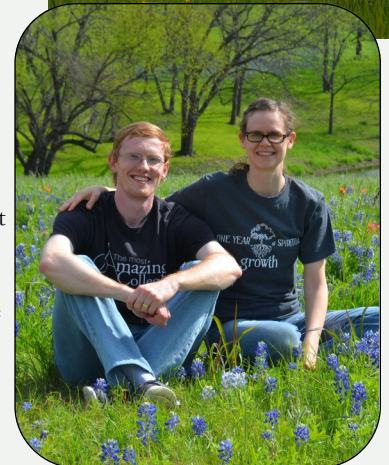
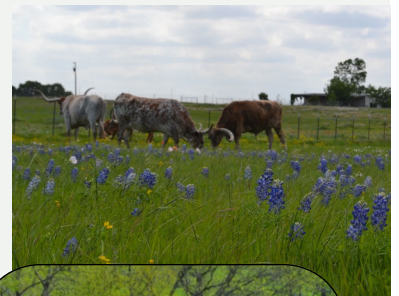
In early April we went on our third annual trip to Ennis, Texas, to enjoy the

fields of bluebonnets. This time we made our trip a double-date with some friends from GFA.

The next weekend was Resurrection Sunday, and we were able to attend the Fellowship Conference which is held over that weekend. This conference is organized in part by the church we attended when we

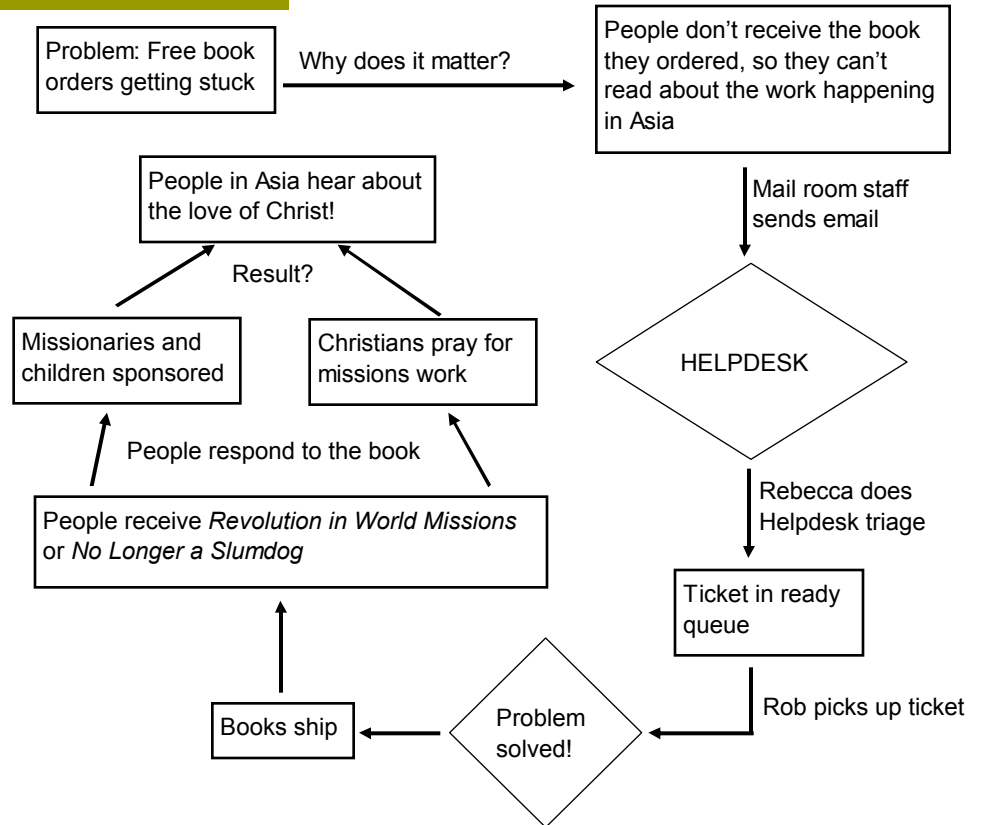
lived north of Dallas. It is always a joy to reconnect with old friends and make new friends, and the times of teaching from Scriptures were also rich and meaningful. Sorry - we don't have any pictures from that event. :-/

Then at the end of April, right before the tornados, Rob's sister Marcie got to come visit for a week. One of the days she was here, we drove out to Tyler State Park and enjoyed a gorgeous hike.



Wild blackberries!

As we serve at GFA in the IT department, we find it important to remind ourselves regularly that our work here is not just about completing tickets. IT is one of the more “background” departments at GFA, meaning that it’s not always easy to see a correlation between what we do in terms of how it is supporting the work of the Lord in Asia. Thinking through our tickets from start to finish, like the one we have listed here, can be very helpful to keep our vision and focus in the right place.



And guess what? Your prayers and support are also included of this endeavor! Even though your contribution doesn't fit visually into this flowchart, we wouldn't be able to accomplish what we are doing if it weren't for your partnership with us. Thank you very much for doing *your* part!

Strangers in the Slums

People in Canton and the surrounding areas have experienced much suffering as a result of the recent storms. GFA missionaries regularly work among people who are suffering hardship, not only caused storms and natural disasters but also due to the simple matter that they were born into an unprivileged caste status. Praise God that many of these people now have the opportunity to know that He loves them!

Nabha was born into a family familiar with disappointment. Years ago, they had arrived in the city, hoping to make a decent salary. Instead, they roamed the dirty streets, collecting garbage for meager wages. When Nabha grew up, she married and contracted tuberculosis. Between the births of her two children, Nabha's husband, Padman, took her to the hospital and bought many medications, but Nabha always grew weaker. Then, one day, Padman died. In the midst of trying to save his wife, Padman had suffered from a tumor on his neck. When it overtook him, Nabha was left alone in the city's slum with two small children to care for. Padman's mother moved in to take care of the children, while Nabha worked to provide a small income. All the while, the tuberculosis continued,

threatening to steal a second parent from Nabha's children. Gospel for Asia pastor Kalki and his wife, Hafiza, didn't know Nabha's story, but they knew the heartache that seeped into her neighborhood in the slums. They desperately wanted the residents to know Christ's healing love. The first time the couple met Nabha, she was more frightened than soothed by their presence. They were strangers in the area, and Nabha didn't know what to think of them. But as Pastor Kalki and Hafiza continued visiting the slum every Wednesday, they began building a relationship with the widowed mom. Nabha told them about her husband's death, her struggle to provide on her own and the disease she had endured for five years. Hearing this, the couple encouraged Nabha from the Bible and told her about Jesus



and His power to heal. As the couple continued to visit the slum each week, they also prayed for Nabha's healing. Gradually, the Lord granted their request. After her miraculous recovery, Nabha began attending Pastor Kalki's church regularly and learning more about the One who rescued her. Pastor Kalki and Hafiza continue to minister in the slums, and they pray many more people will come to know Christ's merciful love and trade a life of disappointment for one of beautiful expectation.

Taken from <http://gospelforasia-reports.org/2014/05/strangers-slums/>

In Christ,

Rob and Rebecca

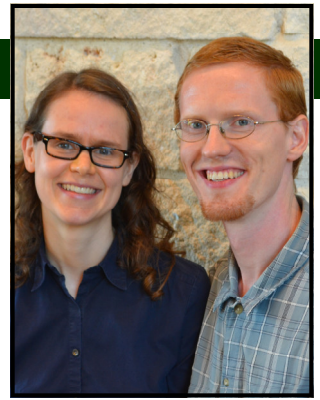
Rob and Rebecca Gaebler, Gospel for Asia (May 2017)

Praises

- **Praise** God for protecting us during the recent stormy weather, and also for opportunities to serve those who were affected
- **Praise** the Lord for good times of fellowship with friends and family
- **Praise** God for our brothers and sisters in Asia serving so faithfully among the poor and needy
- **Praise** the Lord that we as His children get to be part of fulfilling His work!

Prayers

- **Pray** for the families and businesses in Canton and the surrounding areas, rebuilding after the tornado damage.
- **Pray** for missionaries and pastors serving in slums and areas of great need, that they would have an effective ministry in reaching desperate families
- **Pray** that the Lord would consistently refresh our vision and calling as we serve behind the scenes
- **Pray** for wisdom and good time management with office and home responsibilities



Thank you for your prayers

"...be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints" (Eph. 6:18)