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Dear Friends and Family,

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this letter, as it is a testament of God's power and working in the world and in my life. Although you know me, what is contained in this letter will most likely come as a surprise, as God is in the process of changing my character and motivations daily, leading to the unfolding purpose of this letter.

The events of this past year have seen God do incredible things in my life. One of those transformations has been in the area of overseas missions. Seven months ago, I was entering my junior year at Liberty University while studying Criminal Justice, hoping to someday enter federal law enforcement, and had little interest in God's work overseas. During these months, God placed upon my heart a desire to serve Him abroad, particularly somewhere in Africa, and has begun to give me opportunities to learn and exercise my new interest in ministry and missions. Although I do not know what God has in store for my life, or the amount of time that He wants me to spend in Africa, I am following in obedience to what He has shown me, taking steps of faith to prepare for whatever He desires me to do.

This is where we come to the purpose of this letter. This summer, I am planning to go on a short term missions' trip to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where I will be working with a man named Melaku Abebe, Field Director with CrossWay International. It is during this time that I will attempt to gain valuable firsthand experience into the African culture and see with my own eyes the inner workings of ministry and mission work. I do not know what God has in store for me during this trip, but I am willing to be used wherever I can and gain as much insight and knowledge as I am able, using this summer as a time of preparation for however God would have me serve Him in the future. This trip will be a little over two weeks, extending from July 14-July 30, and will cost roughly \$4,000.

There are two specific reasons in which I am writing this letter to you now. The first is the motive of upmost importance: that you would be aware of how God is working in my life and that you would pray for Him to continue this work, especially as I move forward in faith concerning this missions' trip. I believe that prayer is the most powerful tool at our disposal on this earth, as it is a complete reliance on God's strength and not on our own. I ask that you remember me in your prayers as God continues to bring this series of dates closer.

Also, in the area of prayer, I ask that you would pray that my financial needs would be met for this trip. I have complete confidence that if I rely on Him for these needs, He will provide for them in His own timing if it is His will that I serve Him overseas this summer. Although I only ask that you pray for my financial needs, as that is where the need is most fulfilled, if you wish to help support me financially in my pursuit of obedience to God, an envelope has been enclosed if you feel so led.



Thank you so much for your time and for your prayers. I can only hope that I continue to follow in obedience to wherever God would lead.

Eric Long