

My dear church family,

I am so grateful to be a part of a church that is as warm and welcoming as you all are, and one that is so invested in missions. It has been a journey with me, as most of you know, from apathy toward the entire need of the world, to wishing to be one of those to meet that desperate need. Your faithfulness to the commission is an inspiration to me.

Now, I do want to keep this concise. Friends, I want to share with you an exciting prospect in my life. There is an internship for which I have begun applying that gives a great deal of training on church planting and missions work in closed countries. Most of you don't know that my heart for missions is planted in closed countries where people are forbidden from hearing about the best news in the world because their government says it's so. That being the case, I found out about this internship from Greg and Julianne Allen this past summer when they came to visit us as their home church (I met them for coffee and a long, information-packed chat after church).

This internship is in Southeast Asia, and will begin June 6th of next year and last for two months. The link for their website is <http://exchange-yourworld.squarespace.com/internship>. The website is far more vague than the Allens were, but it gives the gist of what I will be doing.

I will summarize it, though I would love to discuss it more in person (I'm attaching my contact information below): the internship gives hands on experience in what it means to be a missionary, especially a missionary in a closed setting. It teaches about business as a route into those countries. It fills the gaps in an education geared for missions (NTBI → MTC), but once which is incomplete for closed country missions. Relevance in culture. Equipping for service. Maintaining integrity in illegality (my phrasing (since it's illegal to be a missionary) The businesses they (someday we!) build are real businesses, not just fronts).

In short... how to "become all things to all men, so that by all means I might save some." Of course, it is only the beginning of the process, but I am so, so excited for the opportunity. I will keep you all posted on developments as I know more.

As always, though I cannot state it enough, your affection, prayers and support have made a deep impact on my life. For that I am incapable of thanking you enough. Your faithfulness and generosity is an example and a challenge to my heart.

Until the whole world hears,

Rachel Harder

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Also, I have a blog wherein I talk a great deal about what God is teaching me!

It is: Nottakencaptive.blogspot.com