

change school for the odd year. So rather than a full year every five, our rhythm became an extended summer in Britain every couple of years. Specifically, in '02 and '04.

Only when I came to university in Cambridge in 2006 did England become a more permanent place of residence for me. And although I am still living in Cambridge, I don't think I've ever actually spent more than a year remaining continuously within England!

Scotland

For the sake of maximising the number of nations I've been to, I will count the Home Nations of the United Kingdom separately, glad though I am that [the UK is remaining united](#). My Dad grew up in Edinburgh (after being born in Newcastle, and living in Argentina!), and [Charlotte Chapel](#) continues to support my parents. Which of course meant that whenever our family was in the UK we would make a visit, and encounter an army of prayerful old ladies that would tell me how I'd grown and how they'd been praying for me. Praise God for the people who have prayed for me!

Singapore

In 1995 my parents joined the OMF leadership team, and so moved to the mission's International Head Quarters (IHQ) in Singapore, where they were based until 2010. The mission had bought the site for the IHQ property decades before, when the island-city-state was much less developed (consider that the nation only became independent in 1965), and so we lived on a street of millionaire-owned mansions, with the incomparable [Singapore Botanical Gardens](#) literally just across the road.

In Singapore I learned to love [ice kacang](#), [chicken rice](#) and [char siew pao](#). In Singapore, my delight in natural beauty was spoiled (and cultivated) by the brilliance of not only [the Singapore Zoo](#), but also the [Jurong Bird Park](#) and the [Night Safari](#). In Singapore, I briefly tasted the joy of being a disciplined [runner](#), training and competing with [Swift Athletics Club](#) (with some success!).

Malaysia

From 1995-'99, I was at primary school in Malaysia, as a boarder in the Cameron Highland's [Chefoo School](#). In certain circles I find that the response to my (ten!) years of boarding school is one of at least concerned sympathy if not horror — but the truth is that my years at Chefoo were incredibly joyful. It was like the Garden of Eden: a tropical garden where we lived in carefree childlike harmony and enjoyed the presence of God — but you had to [beware of serpents](#) slithering through the branches of the trees!

Apart from schooling, our family has holidayed a few times in Malaysia: climbing [Gunung Kinabalu](#) and visiting Penang Island. I've also had [the chance to return on my own](#), and again later with Taryn.

Malaysia gave me the delights of roti canai, nasi lemak, and the beauty of the rainforest. It was in Malaysia that I got to go to the [Commonwealth Games](#), I learnt what [pewter](#) is—and it was to Malaysia that I first flew without my parents.

India

From 2000-'06, I was at [Hebron School](#) in South India. I am incredibly grateful for my time there, as I [was able to express](#) when I returned a few years after graduating. Honestly, it takes a while for me to learn to love India. But though it might not have happened instantly, it did eventually happen!

In some ways I feel like I didn't really experience India until after I'd left Hebron — an international boarding school has its own unique culture (and accent!) that is quite different from that of the surrounding country.

But I returned to India for each summer after I left Hebron and went to university in England: to volunteer with an NGO working with drug addicts, to trek in the Himalayas, to research a potential dissertation. I may also have had ulterior motives that weren't revealed on the travel grant applications: the first summer I asked Taryn out, the second if she would marry me, the third we had a public engagement ceremony, and the next summer we were married. Coming back to India on my own also gave me the chance to begin trying to teach myself Hindi.

Thinking of India brings to mind a string of delicious dishes that I now feel I learned to love much too belatedly: chaat, idli, malabar paratha, chole bhature, butter chicken. And there's the beauty of the country: the natural beauty of rugged Himalayan mountain peaks; the man-made beauty of perfectly crafted Indian architecture; the colourful chaos of the crowds of urban India.

I have been to several countries—but I think India is undeniably my favourite.

USA

I love America! I haven't always—there's a certain disdain for the USA that is ingrained into British culture. And though I didn't mainly grow up in Britain I somehow picked this up. But I have repented of this!—and I am continually blessed by the amazing American people that I keep coming in to contact with. I wouldn't be where I am today were it not for my DTS leader John Peachey, my YWAM Cambridge leader Connie Taylor, and Chad Daniel, the evangelist who confronted me with the challenge to fully surrender my life to Christ — not to mention my old friend Will Tanner! And now that my brother has married Noelle, there's even a family connection (as in fact there already was—my uncle Kevin is American).

I first went to the States (to the state of California, to be precise) for the Christmas holiday of 1995 - 96. (This was during my first year of school in Malaysia.) I was eight years old. My Dad was doing a doctorate at Fuller Seminary and so my parents were living in Pasadena. And for the two months that I spent there we were able to visit Disneyland, Universal Studios, and Seaworld.

I returned to the USA in 2009, again during a Christmas holiday. My parents had been invited to represent OMF at the Urbana student mission conference, and so our whole family's expenses were covered to go! We spent a white Christmas in Chicago before heading down to the conference. It was a notable time for me for a number of reasons: Aradhna were leading worship, Mike Bickle (before I knew who he was) prayed for us via live video-stream, but particularly this was a time when my heart was broken for the unreached people groups of India. After the conference we went to Colorado, and our family was able to enjoy together the deepest snow I have ever experienced.

I again returned to America in 2013, for my brother's wedding to Noelle Tobin. The Tobin family hails from Harrisonburg, Virginia, so Virginia was where we stayed. Firstly in a friend's house in Harrisonburg—and then in a millionaire's hunting cabin in a private hundred-acre wood inhabited by wandering deer and black bear! God bless America! Oh, and we managed to squeeze in a trip to Washington D.C. to see the Lincoln Memorial and the White House.

France

Je suis un francophile. I spent seven years learning French all through secondary school, and even after I went to university I initially (and over-ambitiously) attempted to squeeze in some bonus French lessons.

I first went to France with my family at the age of twelve, sometime in the spring of 2000. We went to Paris, saw the Mona Lisa, climbed the Eiffel Tower, and ate croissants. I wasn't able to return until 2007, when I spent a few days with my Dad in Nice, walking the coastline, enjoying its scenic beauty,

and attempting to practise my French with various marketplace vendeurs. And then recently the [YWAM Western European Leaders Gathering](#) gave me an excuse to visit Lyon—and once again to attempt to parler français. I would love to be able to spend more time in France.

Taiwan

My memory of Taiwan is somewhat vague. I can't even remember the year of my visit.

My parents were going to a conference and so decided to combine the event with a family holiday, for which we joined together with the Seiboth family. I remember beaches, games of Rummikub, and not being as adept with chopsticks as my brother.

I probably need to go again!

Indonesia

My family has been on holiday together to Indonesia twice. First to [Bintan](#), which is less than an hour away from Singapore by motorized catamaran. Bintan is recommended by the Indonesian government as a tourist destination second only to Bali—although the truth is that our holiday there forever persuaded our family that we would rather go somewhere to do and see things, rather than ever again go to a mere tourist resort.

Then in 2007 we went to Java, which [Lonely Planet](#) calls “the most complex and culturally compelling island in Indonesia”. We drank Javanese coffee (and even better is the drinking chocolate), enjoyed [Javanese dance](#)—and before dawn on New Year's Day we climbed the volcanically active [Gunung Bromo](#).

Indonesia is awesome!

Cambodia

I visited Cambodia with my family—I can't remember exactly when.

My Uncle Tim used to work in Cambodia defusing landmines, a fact which meant that I knew a little about Cambodia's sad history under Pol Pot. We visited a land-mine museum while there.

And we also went to [Angkor Wat](#), a stunningly preserved ancient ruin of a temple, and now a World Heritage site.

Portugal

Our family visited Portugal in the summer of 2002. We were back in the UK, and it turned out that some friends of my parents had a villa in Portugal near the sea. So we took the opportunity to take a cheap holiday in another country! And while we were there we went to see a bull-fight.

Spain

It was during that 2002 holiday in Portugal that we also popped across the border and visited Spain for an incredibly brief hour.

So I concede that I certainly need to return to Spain! But for the sake of numbering the countries I've been to, I include it here.

Thailand

I had gone to Thailand for a family holiday with my parents, my brother and my sister. We wanted to enjoy the beach, the delicious spicy food, the unique culture. But we were confronted by the tragic

reality of the country's all too visible [sex industry](#)—and had to leave the hotel we had initially booked ourselves into, because the night-time noise from the neighbouring room made it impossible to sleep.

I have some amazing friends from Thailand, and I [pray](#) to God that he would have mercy upon Thailand and pour out his Spirit in such a way as to bring transformation to the nation, and to all those who are in bondage to the lusts of the flesh and the bondage of Satan.

United Arab Emirates

I went to the UAE in the autumn of 2005, on a school football tour with our Hebron team.

We played some football but that seemed to be a lesser priority than us experiencing the overwhelming wonderful hospitality of some of the Hebronite parents resident in the UAE. We were given spending money to enjoy the [world's biggest shopping mall](#), we drove quad-bikes in the desert, and there was even belly-dancing (and to appreciate the strangeness of this, you have to understand that Hebron School doesn't even allow dancing). And writing that now makes me ask questions which I didn't ask on visiting—and a moment's research reveals [the less savoury side of Dubai's economic prosperity](#).

Dubai is certainly “a city of contradictions: Muslim traditions mixed with capitalism on steroids”. Pray for Dubai.

Hong Kong

Our family visited Hong Kong in — I'm not sure — perhaps the Christmas holiday of 2002-'03? We stayed with some friends of my mother's who lived up on [the Peak](#). I think I'd expected it to be more like Singapore—an island-city made prosperous by trade and a former British colony. But I was surprised by how Chinese it was—and how challenging it was for us with only English to work out how to buy food.

Macau

While we were visiting Hong Kong we also visited Macau for a few days. My memory of Macau is vague. But I do remember that we saw the gravestone of [Robert Morrison](#), the first Protestant missionary to China.

China

I visited China — Beijing, to be precise — with my family in the summer of 2005. We visited the Summer Palace, and we visited the Great Wall. I had, on a whim, died my hair black—and I remember my mother not being able to identify me among the Oriental crowds, used as she was to being able to single out her progeny by the sight of our blonde heads.

Vietnam

I visited Vietnam with my family in 2008—and so we were in Vietnam as their national football team became [champions of South East Asia](#). We spent time in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), in Hué, and in Hanoi.

Australia

I went on holiday to Australia with my family during the Christmas holiday of 2004-'05. We saw the Sydney Opera House, we went diving by the Great Barrier Reef, we went to Steve Irwin's zoo, and we saw a lot of kangaroos (but no wild koalas).

It was while in Australia that I first read *On The Road*, a book which has no connection whatsoever to Australia.

Italy

I went on holiday to Italy with my family in the summer of 2004.

We visited Rome, Florence, and Venice. Somehow God timed it so that we were able to go to see the [Paliò](#) in Siena, and to see Pope John-Paul II make an appearance in St Peter's Square. We saw an overwhelming amount of Renaissance art (Michaelangelo, Donatello, Leonardo — and some other artists who didn't share their names with Ninja Turtles), and we ate a lot of [gelato](#).

Vatican City

The Vatican City is technically a separate state from the rest of Italy, and in fact is the smallest internationally-recognised independent state.

But [the Sistine Chapel](#)—wow!

Greece

I went on holiday to Greece with my family in the summer of 2007, after my first year of university. I'd just bought myself a digital SLR and so spent the time trying to take photos. We went to the ruins in Athens, we walked the [Vikos Gorge](#), and we visited the cliff-side monasteries of Monastiki.

I remember being particularly fascinated by encountering Greek Orthodox Christianity for the first time.

Oh, and we discovered Greek salad! Feta cheese, olive oil—what's not to love?

Egypt

My friend Jonny spent a year in Egypt as part of his [Arabic degree](#). And so I decided to use the break between Lent and Easter terms to go and visit him. (This was in 2009).

We went to see the Pyramids, and we boated up the Nile towards Aswan. But the most significant part of the trip for me was [visiting Mt Sinai](#).

Israel

As someone who grew up reading the Bible, the land of Israel has sometimes seemed more of a mythical place than a geographical reality. It wasn't until university that I met a Jewish person.

That friendship led to me going with him to synagogue a few times, and celebrating the Shabbat meal — and also to praying for the Jewish people.

And *that* led to [Inge](#) inviting me to join her on a trip to Israel. Which invitation I joyfully accepted!

And so the two of us went on the most incredible journey around the country. We connected with Israeli believers as we went, praying with them and marvelling at their testimonies. We almost spent a night sleeping out with the scorpions of the Negev desert. We were evicted at gun-point (!!) from the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. We mourned at Yad Vashem's Holocaust memorial.

Now I realise that any informed person thinking about Israel must also consider the plight of the Palestinian people. And I am aware that our trip didn't engage with that question really at all. (But it was only a short trip). Nevertheless, the question of my attitude towards Israel was one I was seriously wrestling with—particularly in view of the obsession of many charismatic Christians with Israel. And on the trip God spoke to me, through the appointed Torah reading for one of the days that we were there. And the reading was [this](#): *How can I curse whom God has not cursed?*

Ethiopia

Myself and Taryn went to Ethiopia with our DTS outreach team. We spent three weeks there, working with [Ethiopia Arise](#). We had the chance to go and visit (and pray in!) the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. We were there for Ethiopian Christmas—which is on a different date from Western Christmas, and involves a lot more slaughtered sheep!

I really enjoyed the music and the food, and would have loved to have had longer to get to know the country.

Rwanda

The rest of our DTS outreach was spent in Rwanda, where our team leader Immaculee is from. We spent most of the time at the amazing [YWAM base in Kigali](#), but also had the chance to spend a week in the university city Butare.

Rwanda is a beautiful country that has suffered unimaginably. But o! how inspiring to see the way that Christians are rising up within the nation for a vision for reconciliation!

Wales

After our DTS outreach to Rwanda & Ethiopia, we needed a place to escape to for a few weeks of rest and recovery — especially as we were still coming to terms with what a full-time long-term commitment to YWAM would involve. Thanks be to God that we were invited by a family friend to stay in their holiday house on the coast of Wales.

It's a pretty pink terraced house called *Rhianfa*, in a little village called Borth-y-Gest, right on the coast and just south of Snowdonia. Inside are bookshelves filled with books, and there's an old Nintendo 64 in the living room. We spent lazy days reading PG Wodehouse, watching [Downton Abbey](#), and playing Mario Kart. I went [running along the coast](#), Taryn enjoyed the chance to write songs and [play music](#). For us it was a sanctuary and a God-send.

And according to the guestbook, [Vaughan Roberts](#) sometimes spends time there too.

Norway

We took our first Revival & Reformation DTS team to Norway for a week of [Circuit Rider](#) training that was hosted by [YWAM Grimerud](#). Beautiful skies, [brown cheese](#), and swimming in icy-cold lakes — joy! And my great-grandfather was Norwegian.

Netherlands

I went via Amsterdam to a little village called Bleskensgraaf for the [YWAM European Evangelists Consultation](#) in October 2014. My impression then: *The Netherlands is stunningly picturesque. Glistening canals everywhere. Flat and fertile fields stretching out into the wide horizon. Beautiful Dutch farmhouses with thatched roofs.*

Germany

We took our Revival & Reformation DTS ('14-'15) to [Herrnhut for a week](#), where we joined with [YWAM Herrnhut's](#) Revive DTS for a week of teaching from [Dan Baumann](#). And we got to hear the story of the Moravian prayer movement in the very place that it all happened! What a privilege.

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is the full list of the places that I have been privileged to visit in the course of this pilgrimage through life!