

My wife, Jenn, and I felt caught in the cycle of renting, and we ended up giving in to the pressure that being adults meant buying a house. So, we jumped into buying a small home in 2007, right before the housing market crash in 2008. Almost immediately, we found ourselves underwater on our mortgage. **The financial weight dropped heavily on our shoulders, and we felt trapped**, unable to start the family we wanted to start.

Eventually, we welcomed our daughter, Lucy, but the financial strain didn't let up. Daycare costs were stretching us thin, and I felt miserable at my job, which didn't help. When Lucy turned three, we began to realize that we wanted to move back to South Dakota, where we could be close to family and establish the stability we craved.

During my nephew's baptism party, I learned about a job opportunity in Sioux Falls. After applying and praying about it, I got offered the position, but we hesitated about what to do with our house.

Eventually, we decided to rent it out, and I learned that there was a property management company that could handle it.

As we adapted to our new life, we started getting into financial peace, but were wrestling with what it means for us to Tithe. I remember during this time, Pastor Paul Nix challenged us with the idea that **tithing isn't just about finances; it also involves our talents, time, and everything else we can offer**. Initially, it was tough to think about tithing when we were barely making it, but we made a commitment to be obedient in that area. As we started to honor God with our finances, things began to shift, and I felt a weight begin to lift.

Through this "waiting" period, I've learned that even though we're still in it, we're navigating it by **serving alongside each other**. A still, small voice reminded me of the importance of biblical community, which is crucial for anyone facing struggles like mine. Listening to each other's stories makes us better at navigating "the waiting."

Since getting involved at Ransom Church, it's been about six years now. I started giving my time and energy through participating in the big **Casas** build for the 10-year anniversary. That experience opened my eyes to the power of serving and giving. Since that, I've been on about 8 or 9 Casas trips.

I also volunteer at **The Banquet** every Thursday and Friday morning, spending around five hours there each week serving those in need. My involvement there has shown me that I can give my time and energy, even when finances are tight. God has provided me the strength to contribute, and it's truly changed my outlook on life and my faith.

My advice to anyone struggling in their waiting period is to lean into that experience. **If God is stretching you, He's nudging you to grow in that direction**. Giving of your time and resources, even when it feels tough, can lead to unexpected blessings. It's all part of this journey we're on together.

in the waiting.