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# Adoption: In His Timing, for His Glory

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## Adoption: In His Timing, For His Glory

We were a year into marriage when the Lord led us to Cedarville University for Adam's job as Resident Director of Brock Hall. Little did we know, God gave us more than a job, He gave us a community of believers who were not just adoption-friendly but adoption advocates. We began regularly sharing life with students, co-workers, and friends who had been touched by adoption some way. When we began sharing our plans to adopt, we were met with excitement and people who wanted to help. By the time we finished fundraising, the Cedarville community had contributed more than \$7,000.

Once initial paperwork was done and we were home-study-approved, God continued to push us outside our comfort zone. It is one thing to say you are open to any child. It's another to check boxes on an official document of disorders and disabilities. Two of our three "will not consider" categories were changed with excitement when two babies came up for adoption. Neither of those children were ours, but the Lord taught us to trust His will and not our "will considers."

We waited for more than a year, but not in vain. God did so much in our lives! He has sanctified our stubborn hearts. He opened our eyes to an incredible ministry to mothers in crisis pregnancies. We were privileged to meet seven different birth mothers, each making a loving plan for her unborn child. We prayed with each woman, sharing our hope in the Gospel as the main reason for adopting. God leveraged our waiting for His glory and our good, and we are thankful.

After a year of waiting, we met Debra. Debra was young and had three other children, one whom she had placed for adoption previously. She was pregnant

and making another adoption plan. After meeting us and a few other families, she chose to place her child with us. We were so excited! We looked forward to having an open relationship with her. We spent five months getting to know her, her kids, and her life. While we prepared to parent this little boy, we knew she could change her mind and choose to parent her child.

After 48 hours in the hospital, loving a baby who we thought would be ours, we came home childless. Debra had chosen to parent. It was hard, but we trusted the One who brought us this far. God had a plan for our family, and the time spent with Debra was not wasted. If it was just about bringing a baby home, then many would view this match as a failure, but there is so much more. It's about living the Gospel out in our family and to each birth mom. It was for His purpose, in His timing, and for His glory. We trusted Him and waited.

Our wait, as it turned out, was not long. We received a phone call one week after leaving the hospital childless. The social worker informed us there was a family making a last-minute adoption plan and they wanted to meet us that weekend. A few days later, we were matched with a baby due in just 10 days. God was writing a story we could have never imagined.

Exactly one month after leaving one hospital disappointed, we entered another hospital overjoyed as we met our new daughter for the first time. We held her and thanked our King and Savior for His amazing provision of this beautiful child.

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**Adam and Hannah Southerland** serve in Brock Hall, where Adam is Resident Director.