

Prayer in the Kenyan Homes

by Josh Jordison

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love which He hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of His Son Jesus Christ, that ye may become the sons of God, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him—for we shall see Him as He is—that we may have this hope, that we may be purified even as He is pure. Amen (Moroni 7:53).

One aspect of my trip that stands out to me is that of **prayer**. We had a couple days where we were able to visit families in their homes. In Kenya, when you enter a home and before you sit down, the host offers a prayer. I noticed that this prayer is often filled with thanksgiving for those who have come, acknowledging the Lord's blessings, and asking the Spirit to abide with us. I love this desire to start a visit with prayer, even when that is all you do in the house. In the first family home we visited, we were ushered in to a small room, a prayer said, we sat down for a moment, and then we were ushered back outside where we sat down with the family and some neighbors and talked over tea and bread. The hospitality of being welcomed into the homes was very touching to me, and I love the practice of prayer as a welcoming into the home.

Our second day of visiting was with the sole intent that we would offer a prayer for the needs of the people. We did not go into the homes this day, but would sit outside and have a quick moment where we would listen to the prayer needs of the families or individuals. Then, one of the four of us would offer a prayer, and we would move to the next house. It was a great blessing to me to be a part of this. I could not help but think of Jesus as He went about healing, praying and blessing the people in cities and towns. All we were doing was praying, but what an experience! To offer prayers, both aloud and silently, for a people who not only believe in prayer, but rely on it, is an experience I will never forget! Those two days of visiting were a great lift to my spirit.

Teaching the Youth in Kenya

by Josh Jordison

Wherefore, I said unto you, Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do (2 Nephi 14:4).

At no point would I ever say that working with or teaching younger children is a strength of mine. So finding myself in front of a classroom of kids, I felt considerably out of my depth. The original plan for Kenya was to provide a retreat for college students. But, as we neared the time to leave, our team knew the retreats would be open to all age groups. To adapt, we planned on separating the groups into three sections: adults, older youth and

younger youth. This meant that I knew I would be teaching kids. Nonetheless, as I stood before the rambunctious young Kenyans that first day, I knew I was very unprepared.

The first class I had planned was a Book of Mormon Overview. It had gone well with the adults, but my style of teaching did not work as well with the kids. It was also hard to keep the kids from moving the desks and chairs, which were very loud and made it hard to focus. We had limited time to share with those at the retreats, and I did not want to miss the opportunity to share the truth found in the Book of Mormon with these kids. But even then, I was relieved to finish the class and move on to the older youth. However, I had a sinking feeling that I would need to reexamine what I had planned for the next day's class.

That evening I discussed with the others how my class had gone and what I could do better for the next one. I also made it a matter of much prayer. As I walked into the classroom, I knew that what I had originally planned was not going to work for the kids, but I had no substitute plan. As I stood in the front of the room looking at the kids before me, the account of Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah came to mind. I started retelling Alma's story to the class. From that point, the class flowed easily. I shared that great account of redemption and how bad people can become good people. We covered what righteousness is: being in right relationship with God and with others, and how we can work on having those right relationships. I taught the kids the Book of Mormon book song, as well as the names of Mosiah's four sons, which, by the end of class, many could recite. By the time class was over, I felt I had done a better job than any of the classes I had taught so far on the trip.

I know I was blessed by the Lord in that second class. The class did not go well because of me, but in spite of me. I laid it all out for the Lord, and He came to my aid. I still would not count teaching children as a strength, but it means a lot for me to be able to share the precious message of the Book of Mormon with others. And to be able to capture the truth and importance of the book while sharing it with kids was of great concern for me. I feel that, with the Lord's help, I was able to accomplish just that. It is my sincere hope that the kids understood the redemption which Jesus offers, the love He has for them, and that His Good News is written in their hearts as they grow.

The Lord Helps Us in Our Limitations

by Josh Jordison

A concern I had for this trip that weighed heavily on me was that of my dietary restriction; I cannot eat gluten. Growing up, I always heard that missionaries had to eat everything put before them, and it has stuck with me all these years. Yet here I was heading off to Kenya not being able to eat anything with wheat. From the moment I knew I was going on the trip, I began to pray that I would not have any issues while in Kenya with getting sick from consuming gluten, or that I might not cause any offense in trying to avoid

gluten, whether at the retreat or in someone's home. During our trip, it was a prayer I offered every day, and I feel very blessed as the Lord answered my prayers. Most of the food we were served I could eat: ugali (corn), beans, cabbage and meat. I thankfully had James, one of our translators, to help me avoid any wheat in the homes. When I asked not to have the hunk of bread served for breakfast at the second retreat, Ely, our guide, made sure I was given two boiled eggs instead of one, so I did not go hungry. I am blessed to say that I never once got sick because of gluten during the entire trip, and I know that the Lord helped me in my limitations and my concerns.