



"Everything in your life and story will be used, if you give Him permission to use it, if you say yes."
-E.M. Forster

Hope & Haiti

April 2017

Hello!

I don't know exactly when it happened. And I don't know if my heart was or would have ever been ready for the sweet moment of realizing one of my little's was not so little anymore. Saturday mornings are always some of my favorites with my kiddos. On this particular day I remember forcing myself to get out of bed. It was one of those mornings that I really wanted to hide under the covers and shut out the world, but I had promised the kids that I would be in the village that morning and keeping my word is something I really try to do. So on this morning I forced myself to walk to the village all the while telling myself that I would just make it a quick visit. Run down and say some "good mornings" and then head back home.

When I arrived in the village I was greeted (or practically barreled over..) by the kiddos who were pretty excited for a morning that was free to play and explore. Rose quickly informed me that she wouldn't be ready to leave right away (there went my quick visit plans) because she was going to cook some rice. I had to hold in the laughter because the idea of Rose (7yrs old) cooking rice was just too much. I don't remember if the kids pushed me down to a spot on the ground to sit or if I just gave in to the reality of "this will be awhile", but sitting down was one of the best decisions I made. As I sat there I watched as my "baby" girl moved in and out of the kitchen space. The other girls jumped in to help and before long one was off gathering water, another sticks and charcoal for the fire (because why wouldn't my kids use real fire to play with!), and one was sent to get oil and salt from an older woman. I laughed because I knew there was NO way these little girls were going to get a portion of the oil and salt and yet they did. I was in constant shock as I watched the girls cooking. They fanned the coals just like the older women do and they mashed the garlic and onion like every other woman in the village does.



Prayer requests!

** Please pray for extra doses of energy and for the Lord to reveal Himself to each person who comes on campus this summer.*

**The school year is nearing the end- please pray for the student's and teachers to finish strong and for the children to continue to grow and learn. The children LOVE school and many don't look forward to summer break.*

** Pray for wisdom in providing the best care possible to each child and parent in the malnutrition program. Pray that the education given will be understood and that big changes will happen in the homes.*

**Pray that I would have ears that hear so much more than the words that are being spoken and eyes that truly see what He is showing me in the day to day. That I would remain present and open to His call and plans.*

(continued) When I squinted my eyes really tightly it was like the Lord was giving me a glimpse into these sweet girls lives ten or fifteen years from now. My little girls were no longer little and instead I saw little women sitting in front of me.

The amount of rice made was no more than two cooked cups but you would have thought it was an entire pot full. Spoon fulls of rice got dished out to every one who helped and even the littler kids got a portion. I even got my fair portion of the rice and was super surprised at just how good it really was! I secretly wished I had paid more attention to everything they were putting in that pot because it was that good.

This sweet morning in the village reminded me just how much my kiddos are really watching everything around them. They are growing up and these moments I have with them are going much too quickly. This morning with the kiddos really challenged me to step up and focus on what is important with them. I want to see them do well in school and to maybe even go on to college or a trade school. And yet, at the end of the day what really matters to me is that they are seeking the Lord and that they are living lives for Him. I'm so thankful that they pulled me into staying longer than I had planned and that in watching them play I felt the Lord really impressing on my heart just how special and unique each of them are. And how these moments I have with them are so much more than what they sometimes seem like in the day to day of life.

I know I've said it before but I can't thank you enough for following along and for praying for not only me but for my Haitian friends and family too. Most of my kids were just babies or toddlers (some were just twinkles in their mommas eyes!) when I moved here and now they are in school and acting all grown up. I know that this spot I have been given in their lives is a privilege that the Lord has blessed me with and I can't help but feel completely blessed that I get to live this life. There are days when I'm tired and just ready to live closer to my family and a Target (if I'm being honest..ha) and then there are other moments that I know this is exactly where I'm supposed to be. So thank you, thank you for joining with me on this journey. Thank you for praying for my kiddos and thank you for asking about them by name. Thank you for your patience as I know that the last year hasn't been filled with as many blog posts, newsletters, pictures (I am much better at posting on instagram!), and updates. I am blessed to have you on this journey with me and I know it wouldn't be possible without you. I pray that this newsletter finds you doing well and that you too have been given glimpses of what the Lord is doing in the lives of those around you. ~Love, Brooke



Staying Connected!

*Financial Support:

-Mail check to:

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Check written to: Nehemiah Vision Ministries

Memo line: Intern 3

-Online donation:

www.nvm.org/get-involved/invest/financial/staff-support/

-Select under staff support Brooke Smalley.

You will also be able to select a one time or monthly donation.

Ways to follow along and stay connected!

*Blog: brookesmalley.blogspot.com

*Facebook: [brooke.smalley](https://www.facebook.com/brooke.smalley)

*Instagram: [smalleybrooke](https://www.instagram.com/smalleybrooke)

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Swimming!

Just when I thought life couldn't get any better, a small local hotel/restaurant opened up just a few miles down the road from our campus! The best part? It has a real pool! Before taking some of my kiddos to the pool for the first time we sat down and talked about how important it was to listen and how deep the water would be. They thought I was joking when I told them that the water would be even taller than me and were shocked when they realized just how deep the pool was! The first time to the pool was spent getting used to wearing life jackets and being in water that was more than a few inches deep. I was really proud of how brave the kids were and how well they behaved. That first adventure also involved us getting to ride in the car of some of my other American friends that live on campus. The kids literally squealed as we piled into their car and started to leave campus. They couldn't believe how fast the other cars on the road went and loved getting to see a new area. The second time we planned to go to the pool the kids oh so painfully counted down the hours until we left campus and were much braver in the water! This trip was probably one of my favorite days with the kids because we literally laughed and had fun all afternoon long. The only time the kids got out of the water was to eat lunch, otherwise we swam and swam. These trips are so much more than just getting to swim in water. These trips have given us the ability to talk about what it means to eat at a real restaurant and what it means to go and use a pool. Most of my kids haven't left the area right around their homes, so going just a few miles down the road has been pretty much like going to Disney! I am SO thankful for this opportunity we have to not only learn new things, but also just a place to have fun and laugh!