



"Suffering is not the absence of goodness, it is not the absence of beauty, but perhaps it can be the place where true beauty can be known." –Kara Tippetts

Hope & Haiti

November 2014

Hello! I pray that you are doing well and enjoying the last few weeks of fall. During the fall months I'm always jealous of the bonfires, cookouts, and just cooler weather you are experiencing. By December I won't be so jealous though!

I don't think it is much of a secret but I'm a very relational person. I love sitting in homes visiting with my friends. Sometimes jokes are told, other times there are tears, and yet there are also special moments when I get to hear stories of how the Lord is working in their lives. A few days ago I read a devotional that I haven't been able to stop thinking about. *"In missionary work the great danger is that God's call will be replaced by the needs of the people to the point that human sympathy for those needs will absolutely overwhelm the meaning of being sent by Jesus. The needs are enormous, and the conditions so difficult, that every power of the mind falters and fails. We tend to forget that the one great reason underneath all missionary work is not primarily the elevation of the people, their education, nor their needs, but it is first and foremost the command of Jesus Christ- 'Go therefore and make disciples of the nations, Matthew 28:19' (Oswald Chambers).*

This devotional literally hit me hard. I honestly can't get it out of my mind. You see, being so very relational I get stuck in the "needs" and I get overwhelmed quickly. And yet, Christ is asking me to live this upside down faith that is first centered around seeking Him and the plan He has for each person before I start jumping into my own plans of "helping." It's all about sharing His love and equipping His people.

Recently, I got to watch the church be the church. An amazing momma lost her beautiful little girl. She fought day in and out for her daughter when she wasn't able to walk or talk and yet her eyes twinkled and oh could she laugh. While her momma sat with tears rolling down her face, I watched as people from the church



Prayer requests!

- Please continue to pray for the school children. Pray that they would continue to learn and grow throughout the school year. Please pray for health and safety for each of the school children.

-For the NVM church. Spiritual warfare is so real here that at times you can literally feel the battle going on. Please pray for the people of the church to stand firm and for others in our community to grow in their faith.

-That I would continually seek His face first. It isn't my natural instinct to slow down and listen. This is something that I am constantly having to remind myself to stop and refocus.

(continued) walked into the clinic. They surrounded her in prayer and they held her. Then they called the family and helped to prepare and lead the service that would be given just a few hours later. As I watched them I knew this is what real faith looked like. They dropped absolutely everything to be present for this mother, to serve her in the smallest details, and to honor the life of her daughter.

Another sweet moment happened while sitting in a small piece of shade with a friend. I was focused on trying to contain the insane amount of sweat pouring from my body when she started sharing where she was seeing God in her life. She shared that the father of her seven children still hadn't returned and that he hadn't provided for the children financially. She said there was no food in the home and she knew her children would be hungry. Instead of trying to fix the problem or becoming overwhelmed at the insanely difficult reality of her life she simply went to the Lord. You see, she walks with the Lord in a way that just *pours* out of her. She told me she started praying and she knew that deep down the Lord would provide for her family. And when He provided, He did it in abundance. So much so that she had food that she was able to share with her neighbors and family members who also had a need. This woman who didn't have enough was now able to not only feed her family, but also was a blessing to the others around her. To her it is all about showing Christ's love to each and every person she meets. This woman has inspired me in ways she will never know. Watching her live out her faith has changed mine.

The Lord challenged me this week to truly seek His face first. To go to Him and then to go out and spread His love. As I have sat and heard stories and watched true men and women of faith live out their faith, I have seen so much goodness in places that only the Lord could make possible. When approaching my days through His eyes, I have seen beauty that is literally breathtaking.

My prayer for you is as the crazy of the Thanksgiving and Christmas season begins that you wouldn't get overwhelmed or defeated in the lists of tasks to accomplish. Instead you would share His love with each person you meet and live life with. Thank you for your prayers, financial support, and friendship throughout this last year. I feel truly blessed to have you on this journey with me! Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Love, Brooke



thankful

Just a few of the things I'm feeling thankful for this month...

*I'm thankful that I got to see two of my little friends smile and then hear their laughter for the first time just a week ago. I've known these two for a long time and have prayed for them daily. The sweet sound of their laughter is something I won't forget.

*I'm thankful for the friendships I have here. Some of my friendships don't look like relationships I've had in the past. Most are complicated and for a lack of a better word sometimes really messy. And yet, they are beautiful and I am thankful they have allowed me a spot in their lives.

*I'm thankful for the heart of several nurses who saw a need for a malnutrition program in our clinic. These nurses worked hard to come up with protocols, funding, and so much more. Leslee and I now have the opportunity to work with the children and their mommas. These mommas are strong and amazing women who have chosen to fight for their children. God is literally transforming each of these little lives and families.

*I'm thankful for each of my kiddos. I cherish the moments I have with them. There is nothing sweeter than hearing their little voices and receiving their hugs and kisses. They fill my afternoons with lots of chaos and fun!



discovery

One of the sweetest (and most chaotic) moments happened recently when I took a children's picture book to the village. The kids quickly gathered around and were literally amazed at all the different pictures. We spent at least an hour pouring over this book page by page. We looked at *absolutely everything* and oh did the kids go crazy and have lots of questions about some of the things they saw! There was a page that featured all different kinds of food and candy that we spent a long time on. Everyone quickly let me know which candy would be his or her favorite and that it would be ok if I brought that kind of candy to the village one day! And the animal pages were met with complete amazement. Some of the younger kiddos decided the snake picture wasn't necessary and closed their eyes until we turned the page. The photos of colorful fish and tigers were also some of their favorites. These simple moments with the kids are always some of my favorite. Moments when they are all crowded around and learning. Moments when I get to watch their little minds grow and experience things they have never even heard about. The book has now been declared a "favorite" and has already been requested multiple times!