



Integrity

Primary School

Christmas 2014

Home safe and sound. That is what John and I think when we come back from our trips to Africa. To be *comfortable* is a blessing because most of the world is not *comfortable*, not even close. Most of the world lives in extreme poverty. We have 115 kids enrolled this year at Integrity Primary School. Every trip I get to know and fall in love with more of them. When I go to their homes it breaks my heart to see how they live. Most kids are raised by a grandparent who can barely care for themselves let alone several small children. The grandma will spend her days working in the field to grow enough food to feed the family and sometimes does not even have the energy to make a fire and cook, or give someone a bath. The kids are usually filthy. Our clinic staff go into classrooms once a week to teach on hygiene and disease prevention. Some kids simply do not know how to keep clean. Kenneth lives in such a situation with his grandmother who is going blind and is raising 6 yr old Kenneth, two older brothers and his younger siblings who are 2 yr old twins. In April we discovered that Kenneth had a Jigger problem. It was lunch time and I saw Kenneth eating and I was trying to coax a smile out of him. I noticed there was something wrong with his feet. They looked wounded. He was an extremely quiet boy, what I didn't know, was the reason he was so quiet. He was in a lot of pain. When I looked up Jiggers on the internet, it made me want to vomit. The females burrow under the skin and basically eat your flesh while producing more eggs. They are extremely painful. They mainly burrow in the feet and hands, and between the toes and fingers. But if the infestation is bad, they will go all over. The Jiggers make it painful, to walk, to hold a pencil, or just sit there. ITFM made a house visit to check on Kenneth's living situation. His grandma definitely needed help. We ended up sending a team to help remove all their belongings and sprayed their dirt floor to get rid of the Jigger infestation. Afterwards I went to class and got Kenneth to take him to the clinic. I cried all the way there because I knew what was going to happen. They got a pin and dug out all 45 of the Jiggers on his body and cleaned the wounds. Kenneth did not make a sound. He is a brave 6 yr old. They washed his little feet and gave him a new pair of sandals. Then we gave him a ride home so he would not have to walk. I don't have to coax a smile out of Kenneth anymore. He gives them freely. This is just 1 story but half of our students live in situations like this or worse. We checked on Kenneth's family 3 weeks ago. He was outside in a pair of barely there shorts that were covered in thorns. He had a branch and he was beating the bean plants to get the beans loose for dinner. I knew he was getting poked all over by the thorns but he kept on working. ITFM brought them a bag of rice and some new clothes. Kenneth looked so handsome in his new shorts and shirt. His little brother and sister, the twins, kneeled at my feet in appreciation. To have toddlers kneel at your feet in appreciation for an outfit is a very humbling thing and made my eyes leak a little bit. Every time I come back to the states, I wish we could do more, help more families. I wish we could educate more students, I really wish we could build a boarding facility to house the students that we find in a terrible living situation. I wish we could do it all quickly. The reality is, we would do more and do it more quickly if we had the funds. So, we do what we can do, when we can do it and trust God that the money will come for all the rest. Sometimes it is hard to wait. With more resources, we would build more infrastructure so we can help more people. Future expansion means more classrooms, security fencing, a technical school, boarding facilities, more housing, bathrooms, roads and employees. It is overwhelming but such a privilege to be a part of! We need a lot of people to give a little bit. One time gifts are awesome and monthly giving helps our programs to run smoothly without delays. We would sure appreciate if you would consider giving ITFM a gift this Christmas so we can improve the lives of kids like Kenneth.

Pictured are:

Ken's siblings thanking me.
Sweet Kenneth & his foot full of Jiggers.
Kenneth beating the bean plants.
On Back:
Integrity students wishing you a
Merry Christmas!



Please donate!

