

Onthatile Reflections

As the meaning of “*Onthatile*” is “He loved me,” the Lord showed me more of His great and wondrous love while I interned at Onthatile. It was only seven short weeks, but through the Kirby’s ministry, Antioch Bible Church, Monash Bible study, and sweet friendships that were made, I learned more than I can write down.

First and foremost, I learned how to better serve others with a humble attitude, just as Jesus did while on earth. One of the primary reasons for this internship was to serve my Lord more, to be a blessing to the Kirby’s, and to show the children God’s love. Serving others in South Africa can look different from serving others in America, though. Being humble and open in learning how to do things differently than to what I was accustomed to, or to what I believed was the right way is an essential part of servanthood. There can be more than one way to accomplish a task. This was evident in the baby home as I learned to care for each child’s needs, and in the laundry room as I learned how to fold the “right way” that the Kirby home was used to. A quote I read from one of the intern books about servanthood was “He who dares to teach must never cease to learn.” Teach can be substituted with *serve*, but its meaning is the same.

Onthatile has been blessed with a diversity of staff members, each with their own personality and cultural differences. While working with each member, I learned how to communicate with them while also building relationships with them. Thankfully, a kind word and smile can transcend any culture, and the Lord allowed me to learn about each girl as I built friendships with them. This too, was a very humbling experience.

Anyone involved in ministry needs to be flexible, and I learned flexibility on a whole new level at Onthatile! Each day brings its own laughs, troubles, and each child can throw a well planned day off with just about anything. The Kirbys exemplified the ability to be flexible so

well in their home. I am thankful for their example as it encouraged me to grow this ability in my own life.

Last but not least, I learned how to be a better student of God's Word, and to live more passionately for Him. The Monash students and members of Antioch Bible Church exemplified this so well, and I am thankful for their passion and zeal for the things of the Lord. It was so encouraging to see.

I am beyond thankful for what my Lord taught me here in South Africa. It was a wonderful experience, and I am thankful for each of the friendships that I was able to make. God's sovereignty led me here, and He graciously used this trip above and beyond what I could have ever imagined.