

What have you felt has been the main thing or main things that God has revealed to you during your time in Korea?

I think the most important thing God revealed to me was His heart. After spending time with the kids, I could say this with absolute confidence-- I love them, LOVE with a capital L. As I spent time with the kids, I grew attached and by the end of my term, I wanted to be there for them, every moment. I want to see their every move, every laughter, every tear. I want to see them grow. I want to see them sleep. I want to hug them, I want kiss them, I want to treat them out, I want to take them to places, I want to encourage them, I want to sing with them, I want to go shopping with them, I want to do everything with them! After spending a weekend with my cousins, I was dying to see the Namsanwon kids. And then I finally understood. ' So this is like God's love for us.' He desires to be with us. He desires to be in every aspect of our lives. It made sense. He loves us so much and He always wants the best for us. And that's how I felt for the kids. The funny thing is that the kids don't know why I love them. When I told the young boys that I loved them, they seemed a bit confused. I guess that's the same with God's love. We're like, 'God...WHY do you love us?' And He says, 'I just do'. And we say, 'Ah, thank you Lord'.

One profound moment I remember was during camp. After our long, tiring days, all the young kids and the girls slept in the multipurpose room. One late night, after washing up, I went inside the room. When I opened the door and saw the lines and lines young children sprawled there, sleeping so tenderly, with infinite tenderness, I nearly wept. 'These are the left behind children', I thought. Immediately I wanted to be their mother. I felt overwhelmed with so much compassion and love for them. I wanted to just take care of every single one. I believe God was showing me His heart for His kids.

Another profound moment was during Christina's going away violin recital. After her recital, the director (dorm father) and his wife had Namsanwon's band play up there. There are about seven junior high kids that are in it. They played some songs up there, and again, when I saw them up there, using their musical gifts, tears fell down from my eyes. My first thought was "Poor kids...who are they playing for? They don't have any parents to please" as I thought myself when I used to play the piano. I felt sorry for the them because I wanted their parents to see how wonderful and how talented and how cute and handsome they were. But as I pondered about it I felt assured as I felt like God was saying, "I am watching them. I am their mother, I am their father." Peace came over my heart after his reassurance.

God definitely showed me his heart for the kids. But I believe it's just a glimpse and that I can't even fathom how much greater is his love. It's astounding. I really thank God for this amazing opportunity. Now that I am starting graduate school in social welfare, I gained so much experience through this ministry that I could put to use. I am eager for God to continue to move in my life!

Please share or list some of the joys of your time here.

a) Getting to know the kids and staff b) playing with the kids c) heart to heart talks with other volunteers d) prayer meetings e) being able to share to the kids that God loves them

I am most glad that I was able to share my testimony to about four kids that I dearly care for. I told them how difficult my life was after my mother's death and how God really helped me pull through. I told them that life is a very lonely one but that God will always be there for us. They are young but I pray that it planted seeds into their lives.

Please share or list some of the difficulties of your time here.

a) There were surprising lots of drama with the staff and the gwa-jang-nim and gook-jang-nim. The directors overwork the staff and very seldom compliment them and instead discourage them. That took a toll on the staff, causing about six of them quit right after the camp. That really affects the children because the turnover rate is super high, and they might wonder if they're the cause of the teachers leaving and there's lots of misunderstanding.

How do you feel Jerusalem Ministry could better equip or prepare future summer volunteers?

It would be good to remind that ALL volunteers should help out with chores and that just because we are volunteers, we are not exempt from chores and cleaning.

Please share any extra comments, advice, or reflections you have for the ministry.

I think Jerusalem Ministry is a wonderful ministry and I am thankful to God for this ministry. I pray that it flourishes and that God's favor is continually upon it.