Public:

1. What did you learn from your experience this summer?

Spending my summer in Seoul was life changing. I went without much expectation or preparation. I cannot say that it was always easy or rewarding or even fun, but I was stretched everyday. Often, growth- overcoming- was my only option, and I was learning all the time. Maybe it was because it was hard for me to communicate, or maybe it was because of all the downtime, but I had so much time to think and to read and to experience, and so much to learn. Being at the home required a constant dependence on Him. I learned that without His love and wisdom, it is a near impossible job to truly love on the people we’re living with all day, every day. The home is a spiritual battlefield, so it was crucial that I was constantly praying and discerning, holding onto His words at all times and becoming firm in my identity in Him. God revealed His love every single day, and I learned so much more about the Father’s heart for the orphans and for me. I experienced what it meant to give out of the overflow of my heart, not thinking about what they would give back to me. Although my orphanage is a “Christian” institution, many of the children don’t know much about God at all. I talked about the ways that God was working in my life every chance I could get, and even that made God so much realer to them. They’d ask me questions about Him and soak it all in. I’d even catch one of them explaining to another the things I taught them the night before! I realized how important it was for me to constantly speak about God and act the way He does. My influence as a child of God, as a co-heir with Christ, is powerful.

1. Share two or three of your favorite memories with the kids.

One of my favorite times of each day was when I’d lay down with them before we’d go to sleep. Every night, I’d switch off sleeping in the elementary girls’ room and the junior high girls’ room. We’d turn the lights off and I’d give them a kiss before bed. Sometimes we would stay up and talk, and once in a while, one of them would tell me about their parents or why they were there or ask me questions about God. They’d let me pray for them. Those were probably my favorite times. One night, I was sleeping with the elementary girls and we woke up to a thunder storm. The open window let rain in all over the two girls sleeping closest to the window and half the bedroom floor. The smaller girls sleeping on the other side woke up scared because of the sounds. Then they woke me up. We all went to use the restroom together.. Then the littler girls made room for the wet ones.. I was going to sleep at their feet but they called me over cause they said I’d be scared by myself. I don’t know why, but I loved that night. It was so funny to me that the girls sleeping by the window didn’t wake up until they were soaking wet. I loved the way they so easily receive each other when times are scary and they’re half asleep. And I loved how it was a little sleepover every night.

 Soccer camp was another favorite memory and a turning point during my time there. It was three days of pure joy with the elementary boys of six homes around Seoul. It was the event that really made me want to come back and continue serving. I think saw what three days of loving can do to broken souls and the hope that comes when the active army of Christ lets the Father’s love flow. Hardened, unengaged, angry, insecure boys opened up, received love, and even began to give love to one another. They became the best ministers.. I was amazed at their strength. Watching that happen before my eyes allowed me to claim the visions of Jerusalem Ministry as my own- to see these orphans rise up in His love and become real givers. Older boys took care of the younger ones, friends stood up for friends, boys from different homes came together and connected in deep ways. When one of them made a goal, the team would run and pick that boy up and yell; they’d be so happy for one another. Boys that have never met prior to the camp made such special connections with each other for reasons I can’t know. Our goalie, Min-hyuk and our littlest one, Do-hyung, made that connection within minutes. They were always chasing each other around the field and wrestling and hugging. When we lost a championship game by one penalty shot, Do-hyung was so upset. He couldn’t even bring himself to shake hands with the other team. He wouldn’t let any of us talk to him or touch him, but Min-hyuk went over to him and put his arm around his small friend and spoke to him. Do-hyung found so much comfort in that. I don’t know what he said to make him smile again, but it worked. Do-hyung was smiling again in seconds.

1. Any simple words of advice for future summer interns?

Giving and self-sacrifice has to be done with discernment and it comes hand-in-hand with empowerment.

Prayer and knowledge of the Word is essential. Many of these children are so blinded by the lies of the enemy. They need someone who will speak truth and life into their lives. In order to do that, we need to know the Word of God and be in tune with His Spirit. We need wisdom and discernment, because the orphanage is a battlefield. “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places…”

Don’t forget that the sole reason you’re going there is not to teach but to experience the Father’s heart and to share His love to them!