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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #228

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe” (Ephesians 1:17–19).

Dear friends and family,

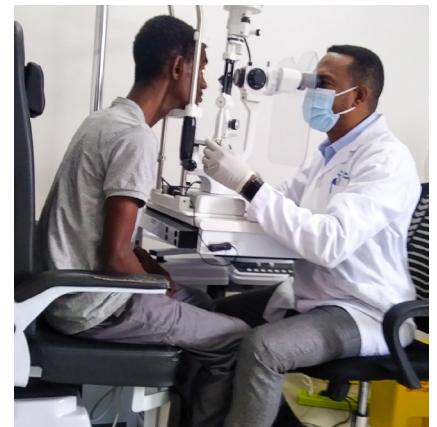
Eyes are one of the most important and valued parts of the body, both physically and spiritually. Jesus recognized this when He called eyes “**the lamp of the body**” (Matthew 6:22), and John Newton praises God for the amazing grace that saved him from spiritual blindness. While most of us would consider physical sight to be essential to our lives, spiritual sight is even more important, and God has focused my heart on this truth in many ways over the past few months.

In May, resident student Gadissa experienced a sudden deterioration and then loss of vision in one eye. This happened around the Ethiopian Easter holiday, so eye clinics were closed and care was difficult to access. One week later an optometrist diagnosed Gadissa with retinal detachment, and it took another week to schedule surgery with a specialist who could treat this difficult issue.

I praise the Lord that He provided a retinal specialist who was able to perform a difficult surgery. I am also thankful that Gadissa is a young man who sees life from a godly perspective. Despite the challenge of sudden blindness, Gadissa told me that he knows healthy spiritual eyes are the most important, and he has seen and trusts God’s incomparably great power at work in his life.



Gadissa keeping his face down, which was a vital component to recovery for the first 10 days after surgery. Though uncomfortable, it is also a good opportunity to “be still and know that [Yahweh] is God!”



Post-surgery checkup

Another opportunity students had to demonstrate the importance of healthy “eyes of the heart” was during the Home Office visit. The grade twelve students enjoyed a special welcome dinner with the Home Office guests, during which they shared things they are grateful for from their time at Rafiki. Everyone was encouraged as the students spoke from the heart during this last Home Office visit before their graduation.

One young woman shared her gratitude for the daily Bible study she’s had her whole life, which God used to help her lead two extended family

members to faith in Christ. Another expressed thanks for the loving people God gave her through Rafiki to minister to her physically, emotionally, and spiritually. All the students were grateful for the excellent education they have received at no cost to them. I praise the Lord for how He has worked in the lives of these oldest residents and for their spiritual eyes that see He is the one who deserves all the glory.



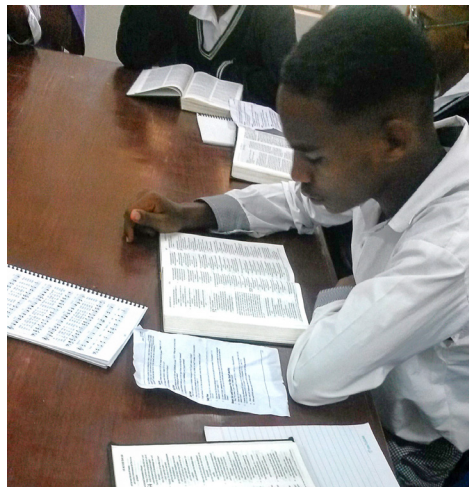
Grade 12 students welcome the Home Office visitors at the airport.



A special meal: good food, great fellowship, and joyful gratitude.

One final example of God's Word at Work to enlighten spiritual eyes through Rafiki comes from grade nine Language Arts. We have been studying *The Pilgrim's Progress* this term and recently read about Christian journeying through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Students were asked to write a paper reflecting on a difficult event in their lives that God allowed them to go through in order to reveal His goodness and faithfulness.

A day student who is on a full scholarship described how his father's death led to financial difficulties for his family and he thought he would have to drop out of school to work. However, thanks to the generosity of his sponsors he is able to attend school at Rafiki, and he knows that "God guides through His power and He is good... When we are suffering hard times, we have to remember what Christ did for us to free us from sin."



I am amazed at how often the Rafiki Bible Study lesson aligns with what we are studying in Language Arts that day—God's perfect planning, not mine!

Let us thank God together for how He provides for so many students to have their minds and hearts shaped as they are saturated in Scripture and a biblical worldview in every class and are daily encouraged by the hope to which He has called them.

Love,

Esther

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Prayer Requests

- *That Gadissa's eye will heal fully and that he'll maintain a patient and joyful attitude during the long recovery time.*
- *For all Rafiki students to have the eyes of their hearts opened to know and love Christ*
- *For Grade 12 students to continue preparing well for national exams, which have been postponed to July*
- *For my work permit and residence card renewal process to go smoothly this month*
- *For 20 new missionaries to serve with Rafiki throughout Africa*
- *Full funding for all day students and remaining orphans in Rafiki*