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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #256

“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13-14).

Dear friends,

One year already—it’s hard to believe! It feels like both yesterday and forever ago that I landed in Liberia. As I reflect on this past year and all it has held, I am deeply grateful for the outpouring of encouragement, prayers, and support I receive from all of you. Thank you!

We have just completed another term at RICE (the Rafiki Institute of Classical Education). My typical week at the college is busy with grading papers, popping into classrooms to teach and check on the students’ progress, and answering lots of questions. There are many moments during the busyness that bring joy. In music class, as we learn preschool songs and activities, we spend a lot of time laughing at ourselves.

One week, I told the students to sing quietly during a song they were unfamiliar with so that they could hear me singing the right notes. After we sang the song again (at the same loud volume), one of the students asked, “What do you mean by ‘sing quietly?’” I then realized that quiet singing is not a familiar concept for Liberians; for them, there is basically only not singing or singing with gusto!



RICE students enjoying the new furniture

Perhaps one of the most entertaining times of the week is when the RICE students have to practice teaching PE. A group of students will take turns being the PE teacher while the others stand in as the children being taught. What you end up with is adults running around playing preschool and elementary PE games and laughing uproariously, and I can’t help but laugh too when I watch them.



PE with the RICE students

My favorite times during the week are when I get to teach and discuss the Bible and theology with the students. I love being able to take time to talk about what the Bible teaches us and what that means for how we should live. Our daily morning Bible study is the best opportunity for this. We are seeing a lot of growth in the students’ understanding of what Scripture really says and in their hunger to know it better.

On the last day of the term after the students received their grade cards, we had another time of theological discussion, which I have decided

to call “*Thoughts on Theology*.” The students submitted good questions, and we had a great turnout, with most of the students attending. Many of them were actively engaged in the discussion, and after the first two hours went by quickly, they enthusiastically said they wanted to continue. I was very encouraged to see how interested they were in learning about the various topics that included particular vs. universal atonement, election, the sovereignty of God related to evangelism, and more. As we explored these doctrines together, I had the opportunity to show the students the importance of thinking through the logical implications of what we believe to see if our beliefs are aligned with Scripture.



Thoughts on Theology

Thank you for partnering with me in the ministry of the gospel!

Please also pray that the Lord will provide more Rafiki Missionaries and more day student sponsors so that we can bring Bible study and classical Christian education to more needy children. Perhaps He is calling you to be the answer to one of those prayers? Visit www.RafikiFoundation.org to learn more.

Love,

Catherine Upton

Prayer Requests

- *God would continue to build His church in Liberia and raise up godly men and women to serve.*
- *The RICE Bible study and Thoughts on Theology time would bear fruit in the lives of the students and lead them into deeper relationship with the Lord.*
- *The 11 new students joining us for our next term beginning October 10 would adjust well to the demands of the program and be successful.*
- *I would be “filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:9-10).*