

## Back from the Bush Mission Letter #4 ...2011

Greetings to all,

As I sit in my comfortable office chair writing this letter to you, Deb and I are thankful to Almighty God for His direction and watching over us for the last ten weeks. Eight of those were of course Patrick Jackson visiting with us in the US and then as Patrick returned back home to Liberia, Deb, and I traveled to Liberia for two weeks recording the student information for the 2011/2012 TSP school year. As Patrick is happy to be back home with family in Liberia, Deb and I thank God for safely bringing us back to our home in snowy Pa. The flight home was long but uneventful and it is great to sleep in our own bed again.

Our first mission trip focusing strictly on education was extremely productive and successful in touching everything we needed to complete. Praise God!

Ted, Judy, and Leah had a great experience and we were very thankful for their help.

After returning from our road trip to Zen-zu, Totota, Sanoyea, and Salala we started working through all the paperwork we created over the past week and a half plus picking up any late coming students who still needed their pictures taken. It is nice to attend to some of this paperwork while still in country, making it easy to resolve an issue in person rather than trying to handle it by e-mail.

Sitting at my desk staring out the window at all the snow, I ponder over the many things that happened during the past 2 weeks in Liberia and thank God for His provision and guidance.... for example: I recall James Yarkpawolo, a humble man who I have known for many years, faithfully coming to our house whenever I visit Phebe Hospital compound always carrying a bag of fruits to “gift” me. Funny thing is that he always leaves me with money in his hand. Go figure! I don’t mind this; in fact, it’s only right as I know James has no job and the small money he has he gets by selling any extra things he has grown. This is a hand to mouth kind of existence that is so prevalent back in the bush.

James, being a good father, has a great desire for his son, Joseph, to go to school. Last week James asked if he could bring Joe to our house to have his TSP picture taken for 2011/2012. I said of course! Late in the afternoon James came to our house toting a bag of oranges, bananas, and pineapples, and walking timidly by his side was his son of 11 years clutching a hand full of tattered school report cards.

After I examined Joe’s information and old pictures on file, I found there was a problem. Joe’s information was correct, but the photo was wrong. It was a picture of his brother, not Joe!

We photo identify all students as there are some parents who want to sneak a student in the TSP in place of another, and that is strictly forbidden. As I was on the porch scolding James for doing this, explaining why we can’t let this happen, James was sitting round shouldered beneath me with Joe standing quietly by his father’s side. I had in my mind we could not help the boy because they broke the rules. As I was standing above James finishing my lecture I glanced at the stack of Joe’s report cards and heard a voice in my

ear, "*just look at them again*". I reached down and picked up the stack of tattered report cards and looked through them again but now more closely at Joe's grades and conduct. He was an above average student with a good behavior report, somebody who wants to learn and by all means should be in school. I paused, looked into Joe's eyes and said come.... let's take your picture. James promised from now on Joseph would come every year to take picture.

Humbly I pray that my tongue will never drown out His voice in my ear.

Deb and I want to thank you all for your prayers during our time in Liberia. There were very much desired and felt. God bless.

Still in His service  
gary & deb