



Claire Church *The Big Game*

I recently had the opportunity to serve at Thrive Youth Group's In-Town Retreat. It was a jam-packed weekend where 45 students slept over at the church, took a day trip to Nanaimo, worshipped the Lord with our guest band from Pacific Life Bible College, and heard a good word from our speaker, Trevor Finstad. This was a great way to get to know my youth girls on a deeper level within a longer span of time together! On Saturday evening, during our last worship session together, one of the band members shared this analogy with us:

As Christians, we can often treat Sunday church or Youth Group during the week as the only time we can encounter and show our passion for the Lord. What we really should be doing is treating these two or three times a week spent at church like the time a sports team spends in a locker room while preparing before a game. The moment we enter our schools, workplaces, homes, is when we are 'playing the game' and that's when we should be putting what we've practiced and our best efforts forward.

This analogy has so much truth within it. I found that this really spoke to many of the students, but also to the leaders in the room.

Matthew 5:6 says, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Since hearing this, I've been able to encourage others and myself not to keep our faith within four walls, but to continue to worship him wherever you go and with whomever you encounter!



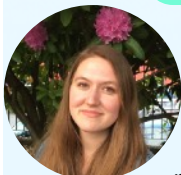
Robbie Taylor *Engaging in Relationships*

Recently I was asked to speak at a local church. As I was pondering what God would have me share, I found myself in a story that is quite familiar to many, and has that catchy song about a 'wee man'! Yes, if you haven't guessed it yet, it was Zacchaeus, from Luke 19. I was struck by how Jesus approaches this man, who was constantly looked down upon because of his height, as well as his role as a despised tax collector. Jesus' purpose and intent is to seek and save the lost, and this story reveals Jesus' heart for those far from him.

There are three things Jesus did in this passage that serve to remind and encourage me about how we should live in light of those around us, and how we should engage the youth we work with each week.

1) Jesus seeks out and engages the one who is lost, the one rejected and marginalized by society and culture and the organized religion of the day. Jesus, amongst a huge crowd, sought out Zacchaeus. Jesus saw a man and engaged him; we see that Jesus looked at him, acknowledged him by name, and connected relationally by giving him a personal invitation to spend time with him.

OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBER JOINING



Taeryn Rose *Taste & See*

A year ago, I was getting ready to graduate from high school and still wasn't sure what the next step for me was. I knew God would provide for me, but my mind wanted something to grab onto.

God did provide for me in ways I could never have imagined, but in the following months my mind was still stuck in an unhealthy habit of trying to sort out every small detail of my life in my head. This past December, I took some time to spend with God and look forward to the new year. I humbly asked Him if there was anything He wanted to teach me throughout this year. Later that day, I read Psalm 34:8: "Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him." I realized that that was what my dry, worried heart longed for - to taste, see and trust God in a way I never had before. Throughout these past few months, as my relationship with God has deepened, so has my desire for the young people around me to be transformed by God. I was recently able to reconnect with a girl I led in my church's Jr High youth group a few years ago, and I was amazed at the change I saw. It wasn't instantly recognizable, but I noticed it in the way she carried herself and as she asked others questions about Jesus and told them of the growth in her faith. It is amazing to see God working in her heart through His word and the people who have faithfully invested in her life.

I am so excited to say that I have recently applied and been accepted for a youth outreach and administrative assistant position with YFC Comox Valley. In this position I will be able to help communicate the heart of YFC and live that out as I connect with young people in the valley. My hope is that through my actions and words I can point them to Christ's love and limitless power.

2) Jesus journeys and stays with the lost. Jesus, despite his busy plans, and despite heading to Jerusalem to fulfil his earthly mission, chose to walk with Zacchaeus despite the judgment of the religious leaders. Jesus chose to pursue this relationship, empowered by the love of God the Father, and spent time with a man who needed it. Jesus spent time in the world of those who were lost.

3) Jesus changes the hearts of the lost. Jesus spent time with Zacchaeus in his home, eating his food. Jesus' presence changed Zacchaeus' heart, and in this account we see a man surrender to Jesus and sacrifice what he has for the sake of others. Again, we see that Jesus' presence has the power to save and transform.

Who is in our lives? Who should we be intentional with? Do we see the needs of others and choose to love them and seek them out? Do we believe that investing in God's kingdom, and making time for those far from Him, is important?

Let God's love empower you, let the heart of Jesus in you guide you. I encourage you to have the same mind as Jesus: to seek out those around you, make opportunities to invite people into your lives, and love others with the expectation and faith that Jesus' powerful love will change their hearts.



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Keagan Preston *Disturb Us, Lord*

I have just recently returned from Hamilton, ON, where I took part in the YFC 2018 Summer Institute. Whilst I was there I received training which will help me on the job as I engage youth in the valley. It was amazing to come together with people from all across the country who have the same passion as I do, and to learn about their ministries. After meeting everyone, it dawned on me how many youth were being influenced and inspired by the work of YFC Canada across the nation...and there were only a fraction of the staff there, so the number of kids and teens is even greater than that! On one of the days we went to a local climbing frame to do team-building exercises. That is where I discovered my true strength. Whilst climbing, my body wanted to give

up about half-way, and I was struggling to go any further, but then that small voice in my head said, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." This repeated in my head until I got to the top. I am so glad I made it to the top, because the view and sense of achievement were second to none. Coming home was a sad thing for me, in a way, as I had to say goodbye to so many new friends. It was especially hard as they are more than friends, but are truly family, brothers and sisters in Christ. On our departure we all said the prayer of Sir Francis Drake. This section of it inspired me and I hope it inspires you too:

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too pleased with ourselves, When our dreams have come true, because we dreamed too little, When we arrived safely, because we sailed too close to the shore.

CAMP PARTNERSHIPS PLEASE KEEP THESE IN YOUR PRAYER



Cassia Philippson *Day After Day*

"We're f**king fine!" These words have been ringing in my ears, etched in my brain, tapping me on the shoulder ever since they were said to me. I typically don't get offended by such harsh language and mostly just let it slide off my back because I am used to it and the language of teenagers is appalling. But in this circumstance it hit me hard. This girl is a student at the alternative school, and I've been desperately trying to get to know her. God often nudges me towards students he wants me to walk alongside and this girl is one of them. Knowing she had a temper, I had never experienced it before this encounter. All I was asking was, "Are you guys all right?" because they clearly weren't. Ouch. I went into my office thinking that I had approached the situation wrong, or that I could have said something different. The rest of the day three questions ran through my mind: "When will she know I am here to help her?" "How will I ever break through?" and "Can't she see that I am here for her?" The truth is she may never know or see that I am there to be a support to her, and I may never break through. But that doesn't mean God is done with her. That is something God is constantly teaching me over and over again. It's hard sitting back on the sidelines waiting for my turn in the game, but I trust God with what he has planned and what he is doing. I know someday God will make his move, because he's made many already and I have to trust that he will either choose to use me or not. If he does, I'm ready. In the meantime, I give this precious girl up to him. Day after day.



Sarah Holmes *Blast from the Past*

It's amazing having a Facebook account that reminds you of what you did almost eight years ago on the same day. I had one of those moments while I was at Maylong 2018 (the Courtenay Baptist May Long Weekend camp), as a leader looking at Facebook photos taken when I was a youth at Maylong back in 2009. Talk about a blast from the past! The tables, the log overhang, the washrooms, the fire pit, even where we place the trailer - it's all the same. What's different is where I am in my life now in comparison to when I was a youth. It's amazing to see, when interacting and observing the youth on this trip, that the issues, talk topics, and life circumstances are not all that different from when I was a youth. Kids are still talking about romantic relationships, plans for the future, where they are at in their relationship with God, and doing their best to sort out the world around them and their own growing lives. I have had the privilege to be a member of the youth group and have Randy speak into my life as a kid, and now I have the honour and blessing of hearing him again, but this time as a leader, and to be there for the youth like other leaders were there for me. Thank you all who prayed for this weekend. It's awesome and encouraging to be part of the youth group, and the lives of those who attend, and get to grow in our relationships outside of the regularly structured program. May the connections, inspirations, and convictions that were made this weekend continue on into the summer and even the year to come.

I would like to make a special mention to the financial needs we have at Youth for Christ Comox Valley.

- One full time staff to raise 50% more support to reach full funding
- One new full time staff to raise 40% more support to reach full funding
- Our newest team member Taeryn Novak in need of 100% funding

As you know with new young staff joining the team and some with no previous community support, having financial partnerships are essential for their success and our mission to seeing a generation transformed.

As Executive Director, I would encourage you to consider becoming a monthly partner or to consider if God would have you increase your partnership amount.

DONATE TODAY

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