

CONNECTED

YOUTH FOR CHRIST of Northern Ohio - Newsletter

Connecting Teens To Jesus Christ And His Church

August 2023



One Said Thank You | Steve Pausch

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy^[a] met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵ One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹ Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

This story from the book of Luke is a reminder that it is not often that people who have been ministered to come back to show appreciation. This is true with our ministry also. However, recently we received an email that is worth keeping around to read when times are tough. This was sent to Stacey Stender, who has been leading our ministry in Brunswick and our afterschool program at the Teen Center Called That Place 4 Teens.

I am so happy we found your organization. He loves to be there. It makes

me happy that he found a safe place and group that he feels like he belongs to. It isn't easy in this day and age for a parent to feel like they can breathe easy when their child is out of their sight. I'm glad to see him exploring other ways of thinking and beliefs and learning how everyone is included no matter what their beliefs or differences are. As a parent of a child with special needs we never made him feel like he was "different", we know he is and he knows he is. But he feels safe with his quirky personality and his crazy hobbies when he is there because no one makes him feel anything but normal and unafraid to be different and to like the odd things. He never strives to reach goals even with rewards. But his goal was to have passing grades and the reward was the privilege to be able to come to TPFT's. We dangled video game time, you tube time and so much more. But your organization was the thing that motivated him. Well done on making a huge difference in the life of one young man. He may not always show it to you guys but you all do mean the world to him. Thank you again. I appreciate TPFT's more than you know.

I believe this is very representative of many of the families that have teens attend our teen center. Stacey has been leading things as a volunteer on a limited basis due to her job. We now have an opportunity to hire Stacey on a part-time basis. This will greatly increase the amount of time we can pour into Brunswick and the great team of leaders there. We would like to raise enough monthly pledges in the next couple of months to be able to hire Stacey to fill a much needed void in the ministry. We are seeking new additional gifts to make this possible.



Will you help Stacey come on staff and be able to devote at least 20 hours a week to make more stories like the one above come true?

Act Like a Man! | Matt Mountjoy

“Be watchful, stand firm in the faith. Act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love” 1 Corinthians 16:13

What does it mean to be a man? What is a good man? A toxic man? Is what God says about how to be a man different than what our culture tells us? These are all questions that probably evoke different emotions than 8 years ago when I started doing guys overnights and “manly man” trips. What is fortunate, however, is that while times might change, the Wisdom and Truth that comes from God never does. “Act like men” is a common refrain in the Bible that was used as an encouragement to act with courage, strength, and obedience to God.

With this in mind, Steve and I had a great opportunity to spend an evening with two of the guys from our Wednesday night crew. We were able to do some fun “manly” things and then ultimately talk about what the Bible says it means to be a man. In the biblical example of iron sharpening iron, or any of the other numerous athletics analogies, the guys competed with each other in things like a fishing competition, and axe throwing. They got to have fun being goofy and enjoying the day the Lord made, balancing on canoes and falling in ponds. The night ended where we reflected on the characteristics of Godly men: providing for their family, pursuing excellence in their crafts and skills, being strong and courageous, pursuing righteousness, godliness, being steadfast, humble and gentle. What was cool was being able to point to things that happened throughout the night, even an example of one of the young men making a point to show how grateful he was for the dinner provided for him as an act of manliness. In the end it was a fun night with valuable time getting to know the guys better and share with them what it means when God says to “act like men.”

Impossible? | Laurie Beal

I attended a meeting recently with youth leaders from a variety of different local churches and groups. We each come from varying backgrounds and have unique groups we are leading. Part of a common denominator that stood out immediately, though, was our common desire to reach young people for Christ, to offer them the same Hope we all have in Jesus, to see young people find His light in this darkening world.

It was cool and inspiring to hear how other groups are taking on this task and fun to see others excited and challenged by what we are doing at The Garage. I

love how God uses all of us to work together to accomplish His work and reach kids together. Our motley group spent a chunk of time praying for the kids we are trying to reach, the challenges they have in these times, and for God to give us the strength and wisdom and creativity we need to complete the tasks we are called to do in His name.

We also identified and discussed something that we, as a group, want to work on together as we continue to meet: helping equip the teens whom we are reaching with the tools and the desire to disciple their peers. Wow! We know how hard it is as adults to try and compete with all of the "noise" engulfing our kids— the cell phone, social media, gaming, social circles, sports, substance use, etc. So, then, to expect young people (who are facing the same distractions as their peers) to be up for that challenge might seem impossible at first glance. However, we know that our God accomplishes "impossible" things all the time, and He regularly uses young people to do BIG things. Plus, these young people following Christ are already bumping shoulders daily with young people who aren't, so they are possibly in the best position to start the process, to plant the seeds and to invite their friends to our groups!

So, how are we going to do this? First, we know we are going to need lots of prayer! Will you join us in the specific prayer that each of our groups would be equipped to equip young people with the tools to ultimately make an eternal impact on their peers? We will also need plenty of adult mentors to pour into the young people who are currently coming to group nights. If you have been feeling God tugging at your heart to get involved with teens, we'd love to give you a tour and talk to you about where you could get plugged in at! Thanks for all you do in making ministry possible and helping us reach out to teens!

Luke 1 :37 For with God, nothing should be impossible.

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