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Little sleep, lots of opportunities

By John Hall

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HAMPSTEAD, N.H.—Robert Nixon loves to sleep. Maybe now that his stint as a summer missionary is over, he'll get some.

Nixon kept moving during his service as a youth intern at Island Baptist Church in Hampstead, N.H., where he served through the Baptist General Convention of Texas student summer missionary program.

He helped with Vacation Bible School, led canoe trips, went on a mission trip to Canada and directed a camp for fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders during his nine-week tenure in New England.

The sophomore from Hill College in Hillsboro said he was pleasantly surprised by the amount of hands-on activity he had. Often he served as a de facto youth director and was in charge of activities for about 55 kids during the camp.

The effort cut down on the amount of sleep he got but allowed him to bond with the 35-person youth group he dealt with regularly, he said. He stayed up long into the night speaking with kids about spiritual issues and woke up early to prepare for the day's work.

“Once you take on a leadership role in a group, you have to sacrifice your

time,” explained Nixon, a liberal arts major.

The way the youth opened up to him and welcomed him in their lives reaffirmed Nixon's belief that God would direct his ministry, he said. He wanted to do whatever was necessary to spread the gospel where God put him.

“I was willing to go anywhere God has placed me,” he reported. “And through prayer, the people in Texas felt God placed me here.”

Although he was constantly on the move, Nixon said he quickly discovered the importance of daily Bible study. Reading the Bible is like lifting weights, he said. When a person exercises, he becomes stronger. When people read the Bible, they become spiritually stronger and more prepared for the day.

“No matter how busy you get in the ministry, you need to be right with God,” he said.

The summer experience prepared him for a future in ministry, Nixon said. He feels a call to vocational ministry but is not sure where God will lead him. The wide-ranging summer helped him, no matter where his journey goes, he added.

“My goal is that people don't know Robert Nixon but know the God inside of me.”

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