

Candy and Jesus

July 22, 2010

Last week offered my teammates and me a welcome change of pace—serving in Vacation Bible School.

The church sponsoring the VBS is the same church that is housing us for the summer, so we already knew the people fairly well. I knew that this week was going to be a challenge—not so much in terms of schedule, but with the children. ☐☐

The first day of VBS was pretty exciting as I taught first and second graders. I had a minor freak-out when I thought that my co-leader might not be able to make it, but she showed just in the nick of time. When all the kids were gathered in the big room for the beginning worship rally, my teammates and I were ready to go and super-excited to meet the kids.

✖ After singing a few songs and doing some pretty obnoxious moves, we relocated to the classrooms. The theme verse of the week was James 1:5. “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”

A couple of the kids who were in my class already went to the church. Others were neighborhood kids who had heard about it from fliers we handed out the previous week. However, all the children were alike in a couple of ways: They all had very short attention spans, and they loved the blame game. ☐☐

All week, Anna and I had to fight for their attention. By the third day, we learned how we could get them to listen to us—candy. The fact that a small child can be so enthralled by a tiny piece of sugar and not become completely enchanted by the thought of Christ makes my heart ache. My heart ached last week about as much as their tummies did.

Over the course of the week, we talked about how we are God's greatest creation and how we can strive to be perfect through him. Each day, we had a Scripture memory verse. And if they remembered it the next day, they would, of course, get candy.

All week, one of my girls, Eve, would recite the verse perfectly without any help or having to pause. On the last day, we were asking if anyone in the class had any questions about Jesus and what he did for us. We had a couple of our troublemakers raise their hands and say never mind, but other than that the room was quiet. We went to the final worship rally and sang all the songs that we had learned all week.

When we finally dismissed and started walking outside to return the kids to their parents, Eve walked up to me. I could see her mom waiting for her with a smile on her face, but Eve didn't seem to mind. Eve gave me a huge hug and thanked me for telling her about Jesus. She told me that her mom worked for a pastor at another church, and that she had always been afraid of Jesus. But because of what she learned this week, she was going to ask her mom about she can accept Jesus into her heart.

Hearing those sweet words from Eve and seeing the love and faith in her eyes made my heart stop aching. All week I had been so discouraged because I thought that the kids wanted candy more than they wanted Christ. God had a different plan, a perfect plan.

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