

## Mountain Top Lessons

After spending a summer working at my church camp, God has taught me many things. My camp Laurel Ridge is a beautiful place in the mountains of North Carolina. It is a place where people of all ages come to worship the Lord. This camp has always been a spiritual mountain top for me. I went there as a child to learn about God and live for a week in a total Christian community.

I knew that my job was not going to be easy or always fun. I went to serve God and give back all that I had gotten from the camp. I wanted to be a positive role model to the children who came. I knew that the job involved a lot of work and the work might go unnoticed.

God showed me that by serving Him, I could see the results in other people's lives and also in my own. I learned that you can learn so much from different types of people. Each person has lessons and advice they can share to make other people's lives better. We just have to be open to listen to them. God also showed me that as much as we enjoy being on the mountain we have to leave it sometime. We have to take what we learned and apply it to our life down the mountain.

Our life is a constant journey, we can't stay in one place too long, but every place we travel through is important. We miss this sometimes. I know that I get put into situations and places and I just want to leave. God has a purpose for me being there and it is part of His plan for me. The reason I was on the mountain this summer was to learn and to serve. I helped show others how God had worked in my life and how it effected me. I shared how God had shown me that Christians might not agree with everything their friends do but we still need to be their friends.

God showed me that working for a church or for a church camp may not always be fun but it is important. My job was to serve Him and do what had to be done, even if I didn't like it. He in turn rewarded me with other things I did enjoy.

God is a wondrous God and he wants to see the best for us. He gave his Son so that we might have eternal life. He gives us Christian friends to learn from and with. He has a plan for us so that we can prosper for Him. One of the lessons I learned was how big God's love is. He loves us so much that He lets us have free will. We can make all the decisions and try to do everything on our own. When we see that we can't do it all on our own we turn to God. He accepts us with open arms no matter how bad we are and how far we have run from Him.

I learned how God works in different ways in each person's life. The way I came to accept Jesus as my Savior may not be the same as someone else. God uses the methods He knows will reach us. It may be confronting death that brings a person to God and it may be growing up in the church. Any way God does it is valid.

He calls each of us to be servants and to take the Gospel to the world. We each have different ways of doing this. God may give us the gift of ministry and we lead churches and become missionaries to other countries. He may call us to share the Gospel in just living our daily life so others can see our example. We may be called to serve humanity or to pray. We have to accept the fact that it is His will that needs to be done not ours.

I learned a lesson from Eli, my friend's dog. Eli has only one eye. He lost the other at camp the summer before. God showed me that even though Eli has to live with only one eye that he can still have a useful life. We are like Eli in many ways. We all have problems, faults, and maybe even handicaps. God can show us how to get around those problems and use the handicaps to our advantage. We just have to let Him do that. Eli has learned to survive with one eye and he probably doesn't remember what it was like to have two eyes.

We should let God teach us how to overcome or live with our problems and not long to be set free from them. The apostle Paul suffered from a thorn in the flesh. It was a physical ailment that effected him. He prayed to God to remove it. God said no.

Through Paul's weakness God would be shown to others. God used Paul to found many churches and convert many people. Paul is an example to us, just as Eli was to me. Our lives are not going to be perfect and they are not going to be easy just because we are Christians. We just have to let God be manifest in our weakness. One of the greatest witnesses to other people is them seeing God changing us.

These are just a few things I learned in my summer of work at Laurel Ridge. I urge you to look for God's lessons in your everyday life and let Him teach you. Some of the greatest lessons come from the most difficult times in our lives. Ask Him to teach you and show you His will in your life. Realize that as a Christian we are to share His Gospel of love with everyone we meet and through everything we do.

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