

## March 2016 Youth Retreat Report

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“We thank those who prayed for God’s blessing on the retreat, the leadership and the young people in attendance. We could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit with us, leading and guiding. We spent a blessed time in the Lord’s presence.” Kerline Jules

### **Documenting the need for this retreat:**

At the end of the Rescue One Summer Camp experience some of the young people shared with the leadership the problems they face as teenagers and young adults; problems such as peer pressure, difficulty growing in their spiritual life, and relationship issues. The leaders desired to form a closer relationship with the youth to nurture them spiritually and encourage them to live a Christ centered life in a difficult world.

### **The Plan:**

Plans were made to hold a one day retreat with the young people arriving on Saturday early afternoon and leaving on Sunday afternoon. Youth included older current Rescue One students and Rescue One graduates. Leadership would be recruited to address both the spiritual questions of being a Christ follower and also the difficulties these young people face in living

out their faith. Many of the young people do not have access to electricity and are not able to study after dark. They were presented with a solar powered task lamp.

#### **A word of thanks to those who made the plan possible:**

We thank the following groups for their assistance: The Andreas Family provided funding for the retreat and purchased the solar lamps which were distributed to the students. The Micah Foundation in Haiti provided leadership for the retreat. Thanks to the dedicated volunteers who assisted with the retreat. The Nelson and Coicou Families volunteered to lead and teach at the retreat. Mrs. Victor, the director of the Haitian Bible House provided 6 NIV Bibles for Sister Daniella to give to the young people who did not have a Bible. Mr. and Mrs. Roger Brummel transported the lamps to Haiti.

#### **The Implementation:**

On Saturday, March 12, 2016 at 3 P.M., after an hour's drive from Port au Prince, 41 young people ages 15 to 24 arrived at the Global Outreach Conference Center in Titanyen, an appropriate, well-equipped and affordable campus. They, together with 7 volunteer staff and leaders, focused intently for the next 25 hours on what God says to us about how we should live and love Him and each other.

After reviewing the instructions and expectations for the retreat, the young people were asked to complete a survey regarding their spiritual life. During the entire time of the retreat the young people showed a mature attitude and responded with attention and joy to the teaching of the leaders. After time for a shower, the group gathered for dinner. Following



dinner there was a time for prayer and meditation. The event for the evening was a movie on the big screen about the end of the world. The objective of this activity was to awaken young minds to the second coming of Christ and emphasize to them the importance of making a decision to accept Christ into their life. The movie was followed by a time of discussion, the study of scripture and a presentation of the plan of salvation. During the time of evening devotions, Mrs. Nelson focused their thoughts on living as a Christ-follower.



There was a boys' sleeping room and a girls' sleeping room. Day two started at 6 A.M. with devotions in each of the rooms. The young people were excited to start a new day, and did not need encouragement to be in the showers. All were in the cafeteria by 7:30 for breakfast with smiles and eager for a day filled with good things. The first session at 8:45 was a Bible study focused on "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit". The leaders were Mr. and Mrs. Nelson, well-known professionals working in church leadership and parents of three sons. They have a loving heart for young people and were eager to lead the discussion. Mr. Nelson stated, *"I like talking to young people because when I was young, the situation was complicated for me, and I did not know what to decide. The Lord used a person during a conference session to motivate me and give me direction for my life. Because someone did it for me, it*



*is always a pleasure for me to motivate, mentor and guide other youths to enable them to make the best decisions in their lives.”* The young people listened attentively, and with passion they entered into the Bible study with questions about the topic, seeking advice and guidance. Even during the break, they asked more advice from Mr. and Mrs. Nelson. Then it was back to more study and by 12 noon they were ready for dinner.

Mr. Coicou led our afternoon session focused on the influences of other groups on young Christians. The impact of peer pressure was a topic the young people had requested in their evaluation summaries at the summer camp. These young people experience harmful influences in the world. Their experience with these new things offered by the world has made them aware this behavior is not in the will of the Lord. They are seeking encouragement and help in saying “no” to these bad behaviors and the influence of others. The youth watched a documentary showing how the behavior of non-Christian celebrities and well know “stars” can be a negative influence in their lives. The young people assume these celebrities are role models, but know that this behavior is not what scripture teaches.



**Student comments:** We asked the young people what they had learned from the Bible study and retreat which would enable them to apply the Biblical principles to their lives and encourage them to live a Christian life. Some of their comments:

- 90% decided to read their Bible regularly
- Almost all wrote they will live a better life that pleases God
- Some said they would avoid making friends who will influence them negatively
- They want to use their eyes, their hands, and their body to please the Lord
- One girl wrote, “I am not the same person; I am a new person. I do not want to do bad things anymore.”
- A young man wrote, “I take my decision today to be a good model; I refuse to continue living a life of sin as before because it comes from the devil. I want to spend more time in prayer. ... Will use the scriptures in order to apply them in their lives.”
- A girl aged 15 said she does not want to watch bad movies with her eyes and does not want to say bad thing with her mouth and refuses to go where she should not go. ” I want to act in ways that please God.”
- A young man said that he wants to trust the Lord in any circumstance.
- A young man states, “I will start reading my Bible regularly. I'll restart to pray like I used to do before.”
- Many said, “ I'll avoid bad company”
- “I will run away of temptation.”
- “I will better manage my time.”
- “I will spend more time in the Lord's presence.”
- “I already feel that my life will be completely different after this retreat.”

**Reflections of Mrs. Kerline Jules, Director of Rescue One:**

“All the sessions, the music and everything were all coordinated to give us a wonderful spiritual retreat. We were all amazed to see how the Holy Spirit had coordinated everything perfectly.

A few tiny girls that we recruited have become very beautiful young girls, and the boys have become young and strong men. Considering the environment in which they grew up, we have day to day continued to help them overcome the challenges of youth. That's why I say bravo to all those who helped to make the Rescue One Program and this retreat a reality. This retreat is an investment in the future of these 41 young people.

The close of the retreat also is the beginning of our new mentoring program. Our three speakers have agreed to mentor 4 young people. We hope to increase this number of youth and mentors.”

**Meeting a physical need:**

In Haiti the electricity is not dependable and the service can be out for hours or days. Some students may find a solar powered street light, but this is often a dangerous walk in the dark. The students were given a solar-powered task lamp. This will allow them a reliable source of light for study. Another of Mr. Nelson's gifts is in the area of technology. He explained how to use the lamp and also how to protect it. The young people received this gift with thanks.

Our retreat was finished. However, it also began a new mentoring program. Our three speakers have agreed to mentor 4 of our young people. We are praying for ways in which to grow this new program.

Thank you to all those who made this retreat possible. May the Lord be praised in this and all we do.