

RED LETTERS

WAC CAMP UPDATE, INDIA

Red Letters was the theme of this year's camp. The words that Jesus spoke in the gospels are marked in red letters in many Bibles.

"Are these words written so long ago still relevant for today's generation?" "Are they trustworthy?" "Are they life changing?" These are questions that most young people battle with, and I wanted them addressed at the 11th WAC summer camp.

HURDLES TO OVERCOME

Muddy puddles are usually fun but not this time - we were praying that the rain would stop as we boarded our bus for summer camp. The forecast for the weekend was heavy rain with thunderstorms. Bad weather was the first of the hurdles we needed to overcome.

The second hurdle was the complete lack of helpers. We usually have about 15 leaders, counsellors and volunteers, etc. This year quite a number pulled out at the last minute. We were asking God how we were to manage with just 4 leaders and no volunteers.

The third hurdle was the lack of campers. Our summer camp ratio is usually 50% Christian and 50% non-Christian. We thought it was going to be the same this



Colin leading the group in song



Colin & Sheeba Pandi



Campers at the campsite



Fun in the outdoors



Sharing God's word

year, until the week before camp, when the 50 odd youngsters who had registered dropped out one by one. We had just a handful left.

The fourth hurdle was finances. Camp costs go up with the annual increase in the cost of living, making it difficult for campers to afford camp. It also makes it hard for me to take my family along. However we have always served at camps as a family; while I take care of the program, Sheeba takes charge of all the background work. This year, we started wondering if I should go alone.

CROSSING THE HURDLES

Written in red letters are the words "Be still" (Mark 4:39). The Bible says that the wind and waves obeyed Him. With a weather forecast of heavy rain, one hour into our journey, we went from a point where the driver couldn't see anything in front of him, to clear blue skies all through the camp - until we got back home. That's how we crossed hurdle one!

Written in red letters are the words "Ask the Lord of the harvest, to send out workers into His harvest field." (Mathew 9:38). Here's a short story from camp that talks about how we crossed hurdle two.

"My name is Pearlyn. I come from a Christian family. I was insecure; I thought I couldn't go back to God because He's perfect and I messed up often. I attended WAC Camp because I heard it was fun. When I got to camp, I didn't feel judged like I usually do - I felt loved instead. God spoke to me at camp and I was able to fit right in. I am now serving as a volunteer at WAC, getting ready for our next beach camp. Lack of our usual leaders paved a way for new leaders. We currently have 10 new volunteers in training to be leaders for the next camp in October."

Written in red letters are the words "I will do whatever you ask in my name." (John 14:13) Hurdle three was overcome as we prayed. Running the camp for a few campers was out of the question, so we got on our knees to fast and pray. We saw the results of our prayer only a couple of days before the camp - when over 50 new people called asking if they could still register! We realised on the day before camp that 90% of the registered campers were non-Christians!

Written in red letters are the words "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). When we got to our final hurdle God came through yet again. Some of the old campers who couldn't come this year paid for people who couldn't afford camp. I was able to take my family too. We even had enough to pay an advance towards blocking the dates for the next WAC beach camp in October this year!

It was a great delight to share the love of God with all the young folks at camp, with Andrew by our side. God not only helped us jump over some impossible hurdles, but did some awesome work in the campers' hearts. In His strength, we will continue to persevere and run the race before us (Hebrews 12: 1-2).

by Colin Pandi