

Y.E.S. 2009
TRUTH RISING

I didn't want to miss one of my last high school dances with my friends. I went to the Y.E.S. retreat with zero excitement. I arrived exhausted and I was not having a good time. The second day of the retreat I was in a small group. I was just about to be prayed over and I remember my youth group leader whispering in my ear, "Elaine, this is it. Don't hold back anymore." In that moment, it hit me: I had not come with an open mind or an open heart. I had gone through the first half of the retreat wishing it was already over. Suddenly I had a total change of heart. I was thankful. I saw the privilege of being there and felt blessed that I had a second chance.

Choices led me astray, but God reached out and showed me the way. His unconditional love for me is one truth I know will never change. "Into marvelous light I'm running, out of darkness, out of shame. By the cross you are the truth, you are the life, you are the way."

~ Elaine Talamayan
17 Los Angeles, Ca.

Y.E.S. HE CAN!

Last October the high school youth from our community in Los Angeles were invited to come to the 2009 Y.E.S. (Youth Equipped to Stand) retreat March 27-29th in Oxford, Michigan. We were all: "Yeah, right... as if THAT'S gonna happen." It just seemed like it was too much to take on. What parents allow their kids to travel 5,000 miles for a weekend retreat at a price of \$650 in this economy? We'd have to be at Los Angeles airport Thursday night at 10pm after a full day at school (or work, for the staff) catch a red-eye flight at 12:15am, arrive in Michigan, rent two vans, and then still drive an hour to the camp.

Most of the kids were a bit reluctant to go. They'd have to give up school and social activities for the weekend. Too many things would have to fall perfectly into place for this to happen. Can you make it happen, Lord?

YES! HE DID!

Just before the Y.E.S. retreat, a very generous donor gave us \$5,000. That subsidized part of the cost of the retreat. Sixteen of us went (twelve kids and four staff) and we saw the power of the Holy Spirit that week-end. The kids caught fire. They started worshipping, clapping, singing and raising their hands. A strong bond was built among them and with the other youth at the retreat. They were encouraged to see so many other kids who were



"Yeah, right... as if THAT's gonna happen!"

unashamed to love God publicly. The kids came back all excited to share at our community's prayer meetings about what the Lord did at the retreat. Every one of them wants to go back next year!

Total time traveling to the retreat 28 hours. Total time at the retreat 42 hours. Total cost \$10,400. Impact and experience of the Y.E.S. retreat on everyone – PRICELESS.

~ Abbie Tanjuakio
Youth Worker, Los Angeles, Ca.

YES: FRIDAY NIGHT

The Truth is a person, declared Nick Sanabria at the Y.E.S. retreat Friday night. When Jesus says, "I am the truth." He isn't just saying, "I know the truth," or "I can teach you the truth." He is making a staggering claim. He is saying he is the Truth, and, since Jesus is a person, we can know the Truth, not just the facts.

What do you do when you are being lied to about your worth? About God's love? What do you do when you can't pray? When you think you are all alone?



I asked for prayer. I heard the truth and the truth set me free.
~ Ruth Kostohris

YES: SATURDAY

The Truth will set you free. Ask the Gerasene demoniac. Ask Mary Magdalene. On Saturday night Peter Demarais preached it. The staff expected it. Jesus Christ did it, and the youth at the Y.E.S. retreat experienced it when, in their small groups, they prayed with each other for freedom.

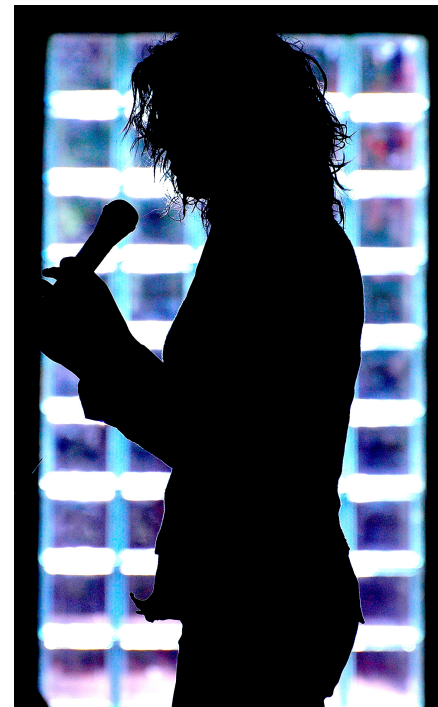
Eighteen months ago I did something seriously wrong and I lost my faith. I hid that fact.



Tonight I prayed, was forgiven and God has restored my faith.
~ name withheld by Editor

YES: SUNDAY

The Truth tells us who we are and that tells us what we are to do. As sons and daughters of God we are called to win back our lost brothers and sisters to the love of our Father. As servants of the King of Kings we are to establish his kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. That was the message of Andy Kolar on Sunday.



Jesus Christ is trampling Satan and will not rest until his Father's children are set free. We weren't just told about our mission on Sunday. We entered it!

~ Amy Putnam



How God Does Math

We knew we were in trouble when we heard the attendance estimates from the various youth groups. We would have to set a cap on the number of attendees. How many people can fit into 2,100 square feet? The Y.E.S. executive committee prayed, agonized and finally agreed we'd take no more than 235 kids. It was a bit arbitrary, but we needed a number. We also decided we should make no exceptions, otherwise we would spend all our time discussing exceptions and not planning a retreat.

We did not like the prospect of saying **NO** to anyone coming on a Y.E.S. retreat, but we knew we were facing exactly that. We prayed that the Lord would sort it out. We told the parents registration would only be complete when we had their documents and payment in our office. With more than a week to go, we blew past the 235 number and had 248 kids registered. We started a waiting list for those who had sent in their payment. The 13th cancellation came the night before the retreat. We called the last kid on our waiting list at 6pm. We had exactly 235 kids. Not 234. Not 236 – but 235!

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