

## BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO GIVE WITHOUT REMEMBERING AND TAKE WITHOUT FORGETTING



Before coming to camp my unorganized schedule with meetings and lack of time was pushing me more and more to the point where I would have to give up the trip. And when one day before camp I said it is impossible for me to come to camp in the established time I felt like I slammed the door in God's face. The things turn out that by miracle I could finish all the work I had to do, pack and be ready to go in less than 45 minutes.

### THE FIRST TALK-SHOCK WITH THE CHILDREN

The first talk with the kids and their parents turned into a talk-shock, as the children were surprised to find out what a Christian camp was about, as they have never been to one before. It took me a little time to talk to the children to understand that these children were very different compared to the children that came to camp the year before. They had different expectations for camp as they were used to camps that the schedule will have a disco time, a lot of unorganized hanging out time and meeting friends time, talk time - about local news, politics, business life, marriage and money. It was quiet surprising for us to hear the children asking question if the girl and boys will share the same cabins, if there is a bar on the camp property and when and where the disco will take place. God loves those children just the way they are and He loves them too much to let them live that way. I believe it was God who chose those children to be at camp and wonderful results were seen.

### THE STORY- WORRY TIME

Camp Good News had a lot of activities, like journaling and scripture memorization, origami and floristry, TaekWonDo, praise and worship time, out-door activities and sports, story time and puppet shows. Ala M and I were in charge of the Story Time. Each day starting 10:30 we were telling the children a story (for 6 groups of children, we told each story 6 times a day) which explained the key verse for the day. Each story was revealing Jesus's life and His sacrifice in the way that the children could understand and relate to. It was remarkable to see children opening and preparing their hearts to ultimately invite Jesus to live in their hearts.



Most of the children come from Orthodox background which means they see God as someone watching over them ready to punish them for any mistakes and failures and not someone to offer unconditional love and blessings. Explaining the children about God being a God of love and forgiveness so they will want to have a relationship with Him was not easy. Every time I had to think and sometimes worry if they will be able to see the love, sacrifice and forgiveness in the story we were telling. After the story was over it was surprising to see how they remembered the details of the story and how they understood the message of love and forgiveness.

Besides the stories Ala M and I had to prepare for the puppet show for the children. Everyday it was a lot of running back and forth from one activity to another; though it seemed great the first couple of days on the last day our bodies started giving up. The children from our group did not take part in the talent show when the rest of the children did. Ala M and I prayed at night and once again we understood that God answers prayers, he is either showing us the solution or gives power to overcome the hardship. The last day of camp the child showed the Puppet Show - and it was GREAT! The kids were happy that they could do it, so were Ala M and me and everybody enjoyed seeing it.



**GOOD THINGS HAPPEN WHEN YOU BELIEVE IN GOD, WHO ALWAYS BELIEVES IN YOU**