



# Camp Penuel East

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September 21, 2011 Greetings from Camp Penuel

We have finished our 2011 camping season and we have some great things to share with you. We had 270 kids this year and 232 of them made a decision for Christ. This was one of my favorite seasons so far. It was so much fun, the kids were great and we had a great staff. We added something new for this season; we call it 'the salvation wall'. It may look like just a pile of rocks but it's so much more than that. Every child that made a decision was asked to go and choose a rock from our rock pile. So there are 232 rocks that make up the beginning of what will eventually be an amazing testimony of what God has done here at Camp Penuel East. We just started this project this year, but we plan on adding a rock for every child that made a decision since we took on this ministry. We will have to add 698 more rocks to fill in the missing stones from the last 3 seasons, which will bring the total number up to 930 rocks. Our hope is that everyone that comes here will see this wall and be encouraged by how many lives God has changed.



**When we have the kids put their stones down we pray with them and share about a similar example from the Old Testament. When people had an encounter with God they would build an altar so that future generations would see it and remember what God had done. We explain to these**



**kids that their stone is just the beginning of their journey and it will forever mark the place where God changed their life. Years from now as this wall continues to grow people will see how many lives God has transformed and it will be a great testimony of how great our God is.**

As usual we have some amazing stories from camp I want to tell you about one of my favorite things that happened. Our assistant director Ryan was a former camper here when he was a boy. Now he is being used to sow into the lives of kids who were just like him. After we had an altar call one week we offer to pray with the kids, it is a pretty amazing experience. Ryan began to pray with three boys, and they prayed together and wept together for over 30 minutes. I asked Ryan later what had happened and this is what he said to me, he began to pray for these kids each one of the boys prayed for something that reminded him of when he was their age. Ryan told me that he had three wishes when he was a little boy and each one of these kids prayed for one of those wishes. When I think of a child making wishes the first thing I think they would wish for is money, fame...I will never forget what Ryan said next. The first little boy said that he wished his dad would stop hitting his mom. All he wanted was for his dad to love his mom and to stop abusing her. This is not something that a child should ever have to wish for, but it is a reality of life. Then Ryan told me about the second child's wish. The child said I wish that I could have a dad that would be around and would love me. All he wanted was a dad in his life, and this reminded Ryan of when his dad left. This is something that no child should ever have to endure. Then Ryan told me about the third child's wish, he wished that his brother would stop selling drugs and that he could have a normal family. Too many kids are robbed of their childhood by the things of this world.



Ryan told me all of this with tears in his eyes it obviously stirred up some old hurts that he has lived through. I don't believe in accidents though, these three boys were drawn to Ryan and he was able to pray with them and let them know that even though life is hard now that God can turn it into something amazing. You see Ryan made it through some tough situations when he was a child. God touched his life and He is now being used to help others that have had a hard life. Ryan is a strong man of God who is attending a Christian College and he is working toward a degree in social work. He was able to share with those boys that God can use their hurts and pain and turn it into something beautiful for Him.

We had a good response to our needs list this year. Thank you to everyone that gave items that we needed, it helped to offset our costs quite a bit. We will send out a needs list next year with all of the food items and everything else that we will be purchasing. We will send the list out much earlier to give people more time to respond and get involved. We also met the full amount of the matching offer that we spoke about in our June letter for \$3,300. Thank you to everyone that got involved with that it helped push us toward our fundraising goal. We love matching offers they create a great incentive to give knowing that the gift will be doubled. Thank you to our friends that made such a generous offer, it helped more than you know.

We have some new camp groups from some different cities planned for next year. We will possibly have a group from Queens, NY and from Cattaraugus, NY. We have some spaces still available and would love to fill every space with kids that need to be here. If you or your church are interested in becoming a coordinator for Camp Penuel East, please contact us and we will give you all of the information that you need. We have had difficulty getting this place filled to capacity, we had a group cancel at the last minute again this year. What we want more than anything is to see this place filled with kids that need to hear about Jesus. We want to impact all of the cities around us, both near and far, for God's Kingdom. We want to be a resource to churches that want to do outreach and offer something like our camping program, but can't afford it. We will succeed in this mission to fill this camp and to seek and to save those who are lost.


I have a hard time asking for help sometimes, but I have to ask now. We are in need of a new truck and snowplow for camp. We have had two snow plows in the five years that we have lived here. The most recent one failed last year the truck doesn't run and the plow doesn't work so it's not very helpful. My family was trapped on campus for several weeks at a time last winter. Our winters here are long it's not uncommon to have 5 to 6 months where you are dealing with snow. We called a company to come and plow and it cost \$100 which would get pretty expensive with the long winters that we have here. Shortly after we paid for our road to be plowed the wind blew the snow back over our road trapping us again, it was the same snow that we paid to be removed. What we are looking for is a Quad cab 4x4 truck that we can install a plow on. We need a vehicle that my family of 5 can fit into for safe winter traveling. We only have a two wheel drive minivan and we have been asked to speak about camp from Ohio to Long Island. We have to travel to speak about camp; it is one of the ways that we raise money for this ministry. We have been looking around for several months and we need around \$16,000 for the truck and plow that is the average of cost for our area. In the past this has been the hardest time of the year for us to raise money. Right before camp is usually when we raise most of our support. I don't know how it's going to happen, but I believe that God will help us raise this money. We want to stay on campus all year long and not leave this place unattended, but we can't stay here if we're stranded all winter long. Please help us get the equipment that we need to keep this place livable. Please pray that all of the funds that we need will come in quickly because it won't be long before winter is here again.

I just want to share something with you. I tell everyone that comes to visit on Thursday nights for our salvation chapel the same thing: I will never get tired of seeing God move in the lives of kids. Every year hundreds of kids get saved here at Camp Penuel East. I can honestly say it is my favorite part of running this ministry. Salvation night to me is the reward for all of the work and planning that goes into running this place.



One of the greatest things about working with kids is how open they are to whatever God wants to do. As people get older and their innocence of youth fades away, it is important to look back sometimes and remember the time when you could just take God at His word, or when you could accept His plans for you without question or reason. It is refreshing to see how real the encounter with God is and how much it means to these kids. I heard something the other day that has really stuck with me and I want to share it with you. "The only thing that is impossible for God is to go against mans will." We need to go back to the place where we have faith like a child. Often we are missing out on God's purpose and destiny for our lives because we are living according to our will and not His. Sure we've all fallen short, but think

of all of the times that we've purposefully done things our own way because we were too comfortable to step out in faith and do it God's way. This is where kid faith trumps experience and wisdom. Kids understand that it's not about their ability, but rather their availability to do God's will. Kids don't get caught up in the fact that they may not be qualified to do the work. They know that God doesn't choose the qualified, but rather He qualifies the chosen. Why do you think Jesus chose fisherman instead of Pharisees to change the world. It's because the Pharisees wanted to gather followers for themselves and the fishermen wanted people to follow Jesus. I think the world is ready for more fishermen to point the way to Jesus. It is time to answer the call, to come and follow Jesus and let Him make us fishers of men. Thank You

  
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