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God's Mountain

I have always enjoyed serving others. I don't know why. It just gives me this sense of joy when I know I've helped someone out and made their lives a little bit easier. So, when the opportunity came up to go on a mission trip over spring break, I jumped right in. I knew that if I sat at home all of spring break I would get very bored and feel very unproductive. The trip would give me a chance to meet some new people and make some good Christian friends. It also gave me an opportunity to serve! There were a few places I could have chosen to go, but I chose the cheapest one, which landed me in the tiny town of Rushville, Missouri at a Christian summer camp called God's Mountain. Now, I'm not going to lie, but once spring break had come, part of me wanted to be able to relax for the week, and I was almost dreading going on the trip. But, God works in awesome ways and my experience was better than I expected!

God's Mountain is an entirely free church camp for kids, located at the very top of an enormous hill! They rely strictly on donations to keep the camp running. This past winter it had a fire that burnt down one of its cabins, which also contained the main office and the workshop. Devastated by the fire, they needed help getting things done that they had to put off because of it. That's where we came in. With 45 pairs of hands working on different projects, we got a lot done in one week! My job for the week was residing Grandpa Spiff's trailer.

Grandpa Spiff is this lovable old man who has been at the camp for years. He absolutely loves the children who come to the camp and they love him. We found out later that he was even

a four-time gold medalist in the Olympics for cycling! Even though he was practically famous, he lived in a rundown trailer that was in great need of fixing up. Spending almost all of his time promoting the camp or playing with little children and sharing the gospel with them, he was left with barely any time to fix up his trailer.

I was so excited to reside a trailer! This was exactly the kind of thing I wanted to do that week. I wanted to get my clothes dirty and use tools. I can't say I had this attitude for long though. It was rainy and cold the first few days we were there and the workdays were really long. I got tired of that quickly and spent a lot of time counting down the hours until we were done or the days until I could go back home and rest. But, I tried to put it out of my mind and kept working hard.

Even though I was tired and cold, I got to do some things I've never done before and I started enjoying it more! I used power tools for the first time that week. I used a nail gun to help put plywood up around the trailer, then I used electric saws to cut out new spaces for windows, and then I used a hammer to nail in the windows and put on the siding. It was amazing seeing the improvements from day to day and knowing I contributed to that progress!

I couldn't have asked for a more enjoyable group to work with! We would talk and joke the whole day, and during our breaks we would play silly games that fourth graders would play and take funny pictures. As the week progressed, the weather got sunnier and warmer, and my attitude got better! I enjoyed going down to the trailer by the last day and was even a little bit sad when we packed up for the last time.

The whole week was not just working on the trailer for hours and hours a day though. We did plenty of fun activities while we were there, too. We did praise and worship and devotions every morning and night. We went bowling one night, had a bonfire another night, played

capture the flag, went paint balling (which I had never done before!), went star tipping, and went on ridge rides. Ridge rides were an absolutely terrifying experience! We would sit in the back of an old beat up pickup while one of the workers of the camp drove through the pitch black woods like a mad man! We held on to the edge for dear life and the louder we screamed the faster he went!

Even though I wanted go home most of the time I was there and sleep in my own bed, I'm glad I went. The workers at the camp were some of the greatest people I've ever met! None of them get paid. They live and work at this camp just because they love God and they want to spread his word to little kids. They were so thankful that we came! The leader of the camp cried the night we got there and the day we left because he was so happy that some college students chose to spend their spring break helping them out. That's when it kind of hit me. I could have sat at home all spring break and done nothing. But, I wanted to serve God on this mission trip. I regret having a bad attitude now, because looking back, it was an awesome experience! These people really needed our help to get them going again after the fire.

I learned a lot on that trip and met a lot of great people. I think God sent me on the trip not only to serve but also to learn more about myself. I learned that I have the capability of using power tools and doing dirty jobs like siding a trailer in the mud and rain! I learned that even the smallest things matter to those in need. And finally, I learned that I need to set my own selfish desires aside when there are people who need our help. God can work in big and small ways and he did just that not only to me, but also to everyone who worked at God's Mountain.