

Honouring Free Choice

What parents should know!

As a Christian camp one of our goals is to explain what the Bible teaches and how to apply it to life. At no point do we attempt to manipulate or pressure anyone to make a decision. We teach our staff to share information and we allow individuals to make the decisions they wish to make.

A spiritual decision is personal. It is between the individual and God. The individual may choose to share it with others, but as such it is a private choice. Although sharing clarifies and strengthens an individual's faith, those who are young and excited about their faith, often make the mistake of thinking that sharing faith is equivalent to changing others. While sharing my faith may cause another person to think about their own, it should not be my goal to impose my beliefs on them. Yet if a person believes they have found something, they will want to share it with those they care about. The difference is a fine line.

Spiritual decisions are most often made in our youth; the older we get, the more likely we are to be caught up in daily routines, and cares of the world. However, those who have faith in God do often have it grow as they mature. Yet spiritual decisions need to be informed ones. There is no point telling someone that they can make their own decision when they become adults – while withholding age-appropriate instruction and answers to questions. Wise are the parents who see this and provide opportunities for their children to learn about Christianity while they are young.

Spiritual commitments need to be decided by free choice and based on knowledge. Otherwise it can be counter-productive to the individual's faith. For example, a person who prays out of ritual or peer pressure, who is not really choosing change may just confuse him/herself. God hears the heart not the words.

As a camp it is our policy to avoid creating situations where campers feel forced to make a decision. We teach our staff to guard against the following situations...

1. Children often want to please their cabin leaders, so do not lead them to believe that you want them to make a spiritual decision. *(But let them know you are open to answer questions, help them or pray with them).*
2. Peer pressure can be a powerful motivation for someone to make a spiritual decision that they aren't ready to make. Try to redirect situations where campers ask for spiritual help in the presence of other campers.
3. Avoid building fear or overdramatizing what the Bible has to say. Let God's word speak for itself.

If you have questions or further concerns please contact the Camp Office.