

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”

2 Tim 2:2 NIV

Hello Friend!

Our campuses are still virtual here, however I continue to host Bible studies and groups to share the gospel with the lost. Recently my group leaders asked the guests looking to explore Christianity, “If Jesus were here with us today, how would you feel and what would you say to him?” One student who was a first time attendant quickly became vulnerable and said, **“If Jesus were here today I’d probably get angry at him. I’d yell at him and cuss him out.”** My student leader courageously stepped in and empathetically asked what were some of the reasons the student was angry at Jesus. He shared about different circumstances where he felt God left him to fend for himself. The night continued on and I was unsure of how the student perceived our group. However, after the night was over, the student texted me personally and said that he had a great time and he joined our call again couple of weeks later. Raw emotions from students are often intimidating, however, I would much rather someone share difficult emotions than sit back apathetically. I feel encouraged when students feel safe enough to be honest and real. It’s an opportunity for trust to be built. I’m pretty sure God can handle people’s feelings and misconceptions about him, and I look forward to slowly working through those feelings and misconceptions with my students.

Another student in attendance, whom I will call Mary, was outspoken about not being a Christian, which broke her mom’s heart. Through the continued invitation of a student leader, Mary finally came to our zoom call and loved it. She is open to faith and on the path to trusting God with her life. When her mom heard Mary was attending our group, with great emotion she said: “Tell everyone who is a part of the group thank you so much for what you are doing for my daughter.” Being on the front lines in ministry is more often difficult than not, however moments like these push me on, knowing that people are praying for their loved one to come across a caring believer.

This is also why I feel it is so necessary to train and coach more young believers and create opportunities for them to share their faith with searching friends. I love to share Jesus with people, but I needed the help of other people to learn how to share that in a loving, relational way. Now it’s my turn to teach student leaders what it means to love the lost. Many of these student leaders have lead Bible studies and attended youth groups, but have not had an opportunity to share their faith with their lost friends. So at the same time that the lost are being reached, young believers are also being stretched and growing in their faith. These leaders, though extremely busy, dedicate their time to hosting the above group. It has been my joy to empower them in sharing the gospel in a kind and understanding way. I believe these tools will last them a lifetime.

With Love and Blessings,

Melanie Otarola

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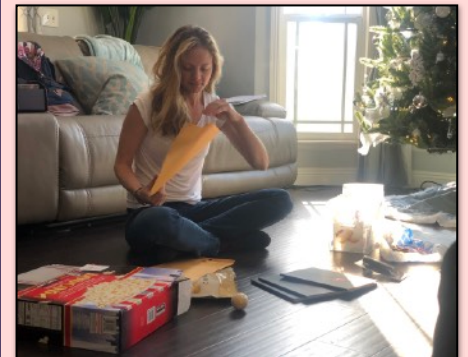
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Working from Home

Prayer Points

- *Student Leaders*
- *Lost students attending our outreach group*
- *Ministry strategy in the coming year*



Making Gift bags for Guests



Zoom Calls