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## *A WONDERFUL RETREAT*

*where my questions and doubts  
were answered*

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Initially, I had troubles deciding whether to go for the retreat as I had work. However, through God's grace, I could make it to the retreat and I did not regret it one bit. Through my 19 years of life so far, I was struggling with some questions and doubts that many of the youths, I believe, are struggling with as well. Am I good enough? What gifts do I have? Am I contributing enough to the church community? And so on. As Reverend Philip Huan delivered his messages at the retreat, many of my questions were answered.

Before deciding on going to the retreat, I did not have a single clue on what the message was going to be about. However, I had a strong urge to go not for the fun nor bonding, but truly to hear more about God's word. And true enough, it was indeed encouraging and fulfilling.

Through this retreat, I learnt how to embrace the fact that no gift is ever too small in God's eyes. Even if you do not hold a role in the church, you too can make an impact just by your words and small actions. All these are possible when you look to God and live a Christ-like life. The gifts you have, or will have, are determined by God. To discover your gifts, you must first discover God. I am also encouraged by the message where Reverend Huan mentioned that we are all one body in Christ and each one of us must play our part for the church to function.

Reverend Huan also emphasized an important point, that we are all wearing masks. Which is what many of us are battling with today. For a church to grow, we must be true to others and true to ourselves. This can only be done when we put down the mask and start interacting and connecting with one another through fellowship on Sundays or any other days.

After the the last message, the entire camp formed a circle and we were given a task by Reverend Huan. Each person would go to at least 10 people and thank them for being part of his/her life and telling them that they are loved by God and by him/her. That night was genuinely a stirring experience as I watched many shed tears of encouragement and thanksgiving. It was a heartwarming scene and I believe many of us were touched and encouraged by the words of others.

Messages from God aside, we had loads of fun with the indoor jacuzzi, swimming pools, gym, arcade and pool tables. The activities planned were fun and yet not mentally and physically draining. They were interactive and suitable for all ages. All of us had tons of excitement and laughter and we got to bond on a deeper and different level.

A shout-out to the committee members for planning such a detailed and wonderful retreat. And to Reverend Huan for taking the time out to inspire and encourage us with his words and the mini activities he planned. As always, the retreat ended on a high note and it has brought us all one step closer to God spiritually as we become 1 Spirit, 1 Family, 1 Heart. I believe the next retreat will be even more breathtaking as new members answer God's calling for them. Hope to see you at JCC Retreat 2018 ☺

Yap Xiu Zhen