

Why I Believe in 30 Hour Famine

BY 30 HOUR FAMINE TEAM

By Mark Oestreicher

I first participated in the earlier version of 30 Hour Famine when I was in high school, back in the middle ages. I proudly wore my “Let it Grow!” t-shirt until it was so threadbare my mom threw it out.

All these years later (really, all these decades later), I believe in 30 Hour Famine—even in doing the Famine year after year after year—more than ever. Here’s a handful of my reasons:

Teenagers are uniquely wired for passion

Honestly, it’s just not easy to move the heart of an adult. But teenagers—due to the glorious uniqueness of their brains, lovingly designed by God—are naturally given to risk and passion. An experience like 30 Hour Famine can ignite a Jesus-y love for others in ways that can quite literally shape teen’s lives over the long run.

Famine is multi-sensory and holistic

The impact of funds raised through 30 Hour Famine are holistic (we’ll get to that in a bit); but so is the learning experience itself. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve had other ministries say, “We want to develop something like 30 Hour Famine, but we can’t figure out what that experiential piece is that so naturally connects to our cause as fasting does with world hunger.”

Teenagers NEED

regular opportunities to broaden their worldview. Since we live in a connected world, teens have more access to stories from Aleppo to Zagreb; but that doesn’t mean most of them are aware. Due to the massive quantity of changes they’re experiencing teenagers are naturally self-centered. Helping them get their focus off of themselves and gain a perspective on the whole world (and specifically those in need) is rocket fuel for intellectual, emotional, psychological and spiritual growth.

I’ve seen the world of World Vision with my own eyes

I’ve been on two trips with World Vision, and have deeply studied their approach to development. I believe in the approach and the organization, and I know that it works. Individual lives and entire communities are truly changed, in every way, through this brilliant work, and it’s an honor for us Famine leaders to get to partner with this Kingdom work in such a tangible way.

I know the people of World Vision

None of us youth workers do this job for the money. Youth ministry (whether you’re paid or not) is a calling, a passion. I’ve seen the same in the countless World Vision staff I’ve gotten to know over the years, from the executive offices to the amazing staff working on 30 Hour Famine. And nowhere is this truer than with the indigenous field staff I’ve met in World Vision offices around the world.

We're heading into months that are traditionally Famine season—when groups tend to schedule their 30 Hour Famine events. I hope you have yours on your calendar already, and are fully engaged in planning. If not: I hope you'll click through and join us!