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Nothing I'd Rather Do

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Nothing I'd Rather Do

BY PIETER DAMSTEEGT

Jonathan Wheeler, a third-year, triple-major student at Andrews University, recently returned from a student missions assignment in Lebanon. “When I went there, I was expecting it to be like very ‘third-worldy,’” he remembers. When he arrived, Jonathan found Lebanon actually was more materialistic than America. It was quite a shock.



Jonathan Wheeler

He decided to go to Beirut after talking to his Greek professor. (Yes, Jonathan was taking Greek as a side to the math, physics and engineering he already was taking. Jonathan decided to add Greek after some discussions about the Bible with family members.) His Greek professor mentioned he should consider teaching computers at the Seventh-day Adventist university in Lebanon. When this was suggested, it was as if all the aspects Jonathan was considering linked together and fell into place. “At that moment, I felt the Holy Spirit leading from then on to get me into it,” he said.

Jonathan ended up teaching, from September until June of last year, at Bouchrieh Adventist Secondary School, located just down the hill from Middle East University, the Adventist higher education school in Lebanon. He taught math for 7th and 8th grades and Bible for 7th grade. Jonathan also helped with chapels and used his background in computers to set up databases for the school.

When discussing his overall experience, Jonathan said, “It gave me a chance to really sit down in my dorm room and journal a lot of times, and find out who I was. ... Like, 100 percent of time management was up to me, so it gave me a huge opportunity to find out who I am socially, academically, spiritually, physically. I came back with a much better idea of who Jonathan Wheeler is.”

In reflection, he believes “that one of the most fulfilling things to do with your life is to be a missionary.” Jonathan said, about his mission environment, “All of my fundamental needs are being handled by God. And I’m surrounded by people that are motivated — who are committed and likewise are feeling fulfilled with life. ... I realize, Wow! There is no other thing I would rather do in the world.”

Jonathan looks forward to possible mission opportunities after graduation and further studies abroad. He stays involved with departmental Bible studies and a local Pathfinder club.

Pieter Damsteegt is an intern in the Communication Department of the Lake Union Conference.

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