

## Devotional Guidelines

### Purpose of Devotions

- To encourage a habit of spending time with the Lord before the day begins & at the day's conclusion.
- To become acquainted with the spiritual needs of the campers through their responses.
- To acquaint the campers with the truths of Scripture.
- To reinforce the things learned during the day in the camper's experience & in the lessons taught by the speaker.
- To guide campers into ways of studying the Bible on their own.
- To teach campers how to pray through the counselor's example & their own participation.
- To plant & water the seed of the Word in hope of the camper's salvation.

### General Suggestions for Conducting Devotions

- The devotional time can be one of real intimacy & blessing, or it can be a shambles. Prepare on your knees, asking God to guide you & to defeat Satan's attempts to disrupt this important time with your campers.
- Get to know your group. Get acquainted as quickly as possible so you will know each camper's needs & how to help him.
- Gather the campers around you informally, but where you have eye contact with each one; nobody on top bunks; no other activities.
- Talk with campers, not at them. Don't preach—just let God love through you.
- Try to involve campers in discussion, but keep control of the topic if it goes astray. Don't react quickly in disapproval to anything they may say, even if it shocks you.
- Ask leading questions & have campers find the answers in Scripture. Go slowly; remember that some have no idea of the order of the books of the Bible.
- Have only one or two specific points. Bring them out several times, especially at the end.
- One night, or part of it, might be spent in asking older campers to write down their one big problem in life. This will give the counselor conversational openings for private talks with campers.

- Be prepared before hand with your aims & topics, but also be ready to abandon them if they do not seem to be appropriate for the current situation. Remember, this is not just another “lesson time,” & can be adjusted to the needs of your group. You may find that what you carefully prepared at home just is not suitable, & what you have learned in your spiritual lifetime will have to be drawn upon instead.
- Be enthused & interested in what you’re doing; a sense of humor helps.
- Occasionally during the day, bring up what was discussed during devotions as it applies practically.

### Devotions With Young Campers

- This depends so much on the needs of the group. If most are not saved, salvation should be stressed.
- Most younger campers will need plenty of time to find the place in their own Bible. Read the passage aloud, having them follow along. It is better to read it to them, as some are poor readers, pronunciation is a problem, & the idea may be lost as they flounder.
- At the close of a vigorous day, tired campers are not ready to sit very long. Ten to fifteen minutes & one strong point usually is all they can absorb. Suggest they think upon your main point as they go to sleep.
- Suggested topics:
  - a) Elaborate on or review the chapel lessons by the speaker.
    - Use simple stories or illustrations from the Word, including salvation.
    - Ask questions, to be sure they understood what was taught.
  - b) Talk about basic Bible truths & doctrines. Begin with the problem of sin. If they don’t know they have a problem, they don’t need a solution.
    - The problem of sin --The holiness of God --The work of Christ
    - The deity of Christ --The Trinity --Prayer --The Second Coming
  - c) Your own testimony, including specific Scriptures, & illustrations of how others were saved—the conviction of sin, the need for forgiveness & rescue from hell, the turning to God through Christ alone, coming just as you are with nothing to offer, etc.
    - It is best not to ask for a testimony of your campers unless you know one quite well & are sure that this will be of help to the others. Often this is not well done & detracts from your message.

## Devotions With Older Campers

- Again, much depends upon your group. Some may be total strangers to the grace of God. Others may have been saved for years & long heard the gospel message. If you have a mixed group, you have a real challenge. You might enlist the cooperation of those already saved in reaching the unsaved by their loving concern for them.
- Discussion of salvation is sometimes necessary. The sinner's status before a holy God needs to be made clear, for without a deep conviction of sin, there will be a shallow conversion & life. Some helpful verses:  
*-- Isaiah 6:1-5; 55:1-3; 64:6,7; Romans 3:19, 20, 23; John 3:19-21, 36; John 1:12; Ephesians 2:1-9*
- For the more mature ones you could teach basic Bible truths & doctrines:
  - The value of the blood of Christ
  - The greatness of God – justice & mercy
  - Works vs. grace
  - Deity of Christ
  - Daily confession of sin & our walk with the Lord
  - The ministry of the Holy Spirit
  - Prayer
  - Bible study
  - Telling others about Christ
- If the group has many who are from assemblies &/or have been to camp often, a verse-by-verse book study might be good:
  - 1 Timothy
  - 2 Timothy
  - Hebrews
  - Galatians
  - Ephesians
  - Philippians
  - Colossians
  - 1 John
- Alternative method:
  - a) On the first day, have them write in their notebooks questions like:
    - What does this passage teach you about God/Christ?
    - Is there a promise to claim?
    - Is there an example to follow?
    - Is there a command to obey?
    - Is there something to pray about?
    - What is the most important thing to remember?
  - b) Each evening have them read the passage & write the answers down.
  - c) Following this, discuss the answers orally.
  - d) The next day, ask them if they remember what they wrote.
  - e) This gives campers a chance to establish habits that will be helpful to them when they return home.

### Guidelines For Prayer

It is important to have a daily time of prayer with the campers. This may be done in conjunction with the daily devotions, or it may be a time set aside by you for your cabin particularly for the purpose of prayer. The following guidelines are suggested:

1. A prayer time depends upon the spiritual maturity of the group, & the amount of experience they have had in praying aloud.
2. It is not a good practice to ask a camper to pray at the beginning of the week, unless the camper has agreed in advance.
3. When the counselor prays, statements should use short sentences, familiar words & brevity.
4. Ask for prayer requests from the group. Encourage brief requests about each other & about things at camp. Also help the campers recall things for which they can give praise & thanks to God.
5. The willingness of the camper to pray aloud often increases as the week progresses. Be sure to encourage such willingness.
6. Be careful not to embarrass campers who do not wish to pray aloud. The idea of going around in a circle should be avoided unless all are in the habit of participating.
7. Avoid preaching at the campers in your prayers.

## Suggestions For Devotion Topics

1. Salvation—Romans Road—3:23; 6:23; 10:9,10
2. Assurance—John 1:12; John 10:27-29; 1 John 5:13
3. Bible Study—liken to eating *Milk*—1 Peter 2:2; *Water*—John 4:14; *Honey*—Psalm 81:16; *Meat*—Hebrews 5:14; *Bread*—John 6:51; *Fruit*—Galatians 5:22,23; *Armor of God*—Ephesians 6
4. Prayer—Matthew 6:9-14; Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 4:14-16
5. Christ the Shepherd  
*Good*—John 10:11; *Chief*—2 Peter 5:4; *Great*—Hebrews 13:20
6. "I AM's" in John's Gospel—*Bread*—John 6:35; *Resurrection*—John 11:35; *Light*—John 8:12; *Shepherd*—John 10:11; *Way, Truth, & Life*—John 14:6; *Vine*—John 15:5
7. Lordship of Christ
8. Sin in the believer & unbeliever—1 John 1,3
9. Living for Christ
10. Telling Others, *How To Give Away Your Faith* by Paul Little
11. Attributes of God: *Omniscient; Omnipotent; Omnipresent; Holy; Just; Love; Unchangeable; Righteous; Sovereign*
12. Holy Spirit—a) Leads—Rom. 8:14; b) Guides—Jn. 16:13; c) Enlightens—1 Cor. 3:16; d) Teaches & reminds—Jn. 14:26; e) Empowers—Acts 1:8; f) Indwells—1 Cor. 3:16; g) Fills—Eph. 5:18 h) Quench not—1 Thes. 5:19; i) Grieve not—Eph. 4:30
13. Second Coming
14. The wiles & ways of Satan
15. Verse-by-verse book study (selected chapters) if the group is quite familiar with Bible truths—*1 or 2 Timothy; Philippians; 1 John*
16. Bible Heroes or Heroines
17. Three classes of people—  
Natural man, Carnal man (1 Corinthians 2,3), Spiritual man
18. The spiritual blessings we enjoy in Christ—Ephesians 1
19. Review of the "able" verses  
a) To save—Hebrews 7:25; b) To succor—Hebrews 2:18;  
c) To build up—Acts 20:32; d) To keep—Jude 24;  
e) To present us—Jude 24; f) To change us—Philippians 3:21;  
g) To do all this—Matthew 9:28

(Christian Bookstores will have books on devotions for children & teens.)

(adapted from Sandy Creek Bible Camp materials)