

Opening Night: Welcome

Luke 12:22–32 The Message

[Jesus said to his disciples] "Don't fuss about what's on the table at mealtimes or if the clothes in your closet are in fashion. There is far more to your inner life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body. Look at the ravens, free and unfettered, not tied down to a job description, carefree in the care of God. And you count for more.

"Has anyone by fussing before the mirror ever gotten taller by so much as an inch? If fussing can't even do that, why fuss at all? Walk into the fields and look at the wildflowers. They don't fuss with their appearance—but have you ever seen color and design quite like it? The ten best-dressed men and women in the country look shabby alongside them. If God gives such attention to the wildflowers, most of them never even seen, don't you think [God] will attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you?

"What I'm trying to do here is get you to relax, not be so preoccupied with *getting* so you can respond to God's *giving*. People who don't know God and the way [God] works fuss over these things, but you know God and how [God] works. Steep yourself in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met. Don't be afraid of missing out. You're my dearest friends! [God] wants to give you the very kingdom itself.

Jesus has just shared a story about a greedy rich farmer. Now he turns more directly to his disciples, reminding them that they are much more than what they eat or what they wear. If God cares enough to put beauty into the smallest of wildflowers, think of the inner beauty God has placed in you.

Encourage campers to take this paragraph to heart this week. First remember that God places beauty in all creation, and that includes each person present this week at camp.

Second, challenge everyone to relax this week and not worry or fuss about life's little things. Don't let how they look or even what they do preoccupy their thoughts. The goal this week is to live in not the reality of the world, but in God's reality.

This week, let go of the things in life that pull you away from God—receive and respond to the gifts God is giving.

Scripture Study

Scriptures are used throughout this resource to set the theme and lessons for each day. This section is provided to help leaders understand why specific scriptures have been chosen and how to share them.

Copy and share this section with your camp leadership.

Breathe . . . Just Breathe
Chaos Class
Camp Planners and Directors
Worship
Music
Campfire
Counselors



Awesome! There is no word that better describes the complex design of God's nature. This beautiful poem appropriately gives God the glory for the majesty and design of creation.

It acknowledges God as the master artist.

- You made the springs...
- You cause the grace to grow...
- You have made the moon...

We are reminded of our humble dependence on God for that which supports this life.

God not only creates, God provides. The complex systems required to sustain life have been set in motion for our convenience.

- springs to give animals drink
- grass for the cattle
- bread for the human heart
- trees for the birds to build nests
- high mountains give home to wild goats

Challenge campers to invest time this week to awake their awareness of all creation and its interconnected with each of our lives. Take notice. Notice the wildflowers, the birds, the bugs on the ground, and the stars in the sky. Rejoice in the greatness of all creation. Give praise and thanks to God.

Day 1: Creator of Awe

Psalms 104:10-25, 27-30 NRSV

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills,

giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst.

By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches.

From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

The trees of the **LORD** are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that [God] planted.

In them the birds build their nests; the stork has its home in the fir trees.

The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the conies.

You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows it time for setting.

You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.

The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God.

When the sun rises, they withdraw and lie down in their dens.

People go to their work and to their labor until the evening.

O **LORD**, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great.

These all look to you to give them their food in due season;

when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.

When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground.

Today is all about recognizing God's presence in each individual. This psalm of David will be used to bring home the theme, "God in You and Me."

It's simple really. God is present everywhere and therefore knows all. God made us, therefore God knows us. We cannot flee from the presence of God because the Spirit is present within the uniqueness of each individual. Therefore God is present in you, and God is present in me.

This message is powerfully expressed, not as a sermon or challenge to others, but a personal recognition of God. He says it to God, he acknowledges God, he gives God the glory.

Build on yesterday's lesson that acknowledged each of us as part of God's awesome creation. Because we are God's creation, God knows us, loves us, and support us.

How lucky we are that even when we try to push God away, we cannot. Praise God by trying to always find the God in you and me.

Day 2: God in You and Me

Psalm 139:1-14 NRSV

O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.
Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,"
even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.
For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wisdom—it's a "God thing." That is the point of the day. In the search for recognizing and bringing "God things" into our life, we must also recognize that wisdom is also a God thing.

Proverbs 2:1-11 places wisdom as a "God thing."

"For the **LORD** gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding."

Another important point is that with the gift of wisdom from God, you will understand righteousness and justice and equity. For people who claim to promote communities of joy, hope, love, and peace, to seek the understanding that comes from God's wisdom must consistently be our goal.

1 Corinthians 2:6-13 reveals that wisdom is revealed to us through the Spirit. Build on yesterday's theme.

"No one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God."—verse 11

Use these scriptures to open discussions with the campers concerning the difference between wisdom of the human spirit and wisdom of God's Spirit and how one tells the difference.

Day 3: In Search of Wisdom

Proverbs 2:1-11 NRSV

My child, if you accept my words and treasure up my commandments within you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and incline your heart to understanding;
if you indeed cry out for insight, and raise your voice for understanding;
if you seek it like silver, and search for it as for hidden treasures—
then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.
For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding;
he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk blamelessly,
guarding the paths of justice and preserving the way of his faithful ones.
Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity,
every good path;
for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;
prudence will watch over you; and understanding will guard you.

1 Corinthians 2:6-13 NRSV

We do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age . . . But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But, as it is written,
"What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him"—
these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

The words of Ephesians 3:14-19 relay a prayer by the apostle Paul to God for a people he dearly loved, the Ephesians. It was part of a letter from him, but as is often typical in Paul's letters, this letter is mixed with instruction and counsel for the people with prayers to God for the people he was writing to.

This prayer is an example of one petitioned out of love and concern. The phrase you should focus on today is, "rooted and grounded in love." Paul prayed that they will know the love of Christ that fills one with the fullness of God. Discuss what it means to be rooted and grounded in God's love.

1 John 4:7-21 is suggested for use with younger campers, but will also be of value to older campers. It builds beautifully on the themes of previous days. It reminds us of God's unconditional love for us, the blessings that come when we allow ourselves to be grounded in that love, and the greatest commandment left by Jesus for his disciples, "if you love God, you must also love others.

Day 4: Grounded in Love

Ephesians 3:14-19 NRSV

I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

1 John 4:7-21 NRSV

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Apostle Paul continued to teach the importance of love and compassion. One cannot just stop doing bad, they must learn to do good in all that they do.

Build on yesterday's theme of being rooted and grounded in love. It is love that binds us together.

This is the last Chaos class of the week. Help this scripture speak to the campers as a guide for when they get home.

- Clothe yourself in compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.
- The Lord forgives you, so you forgive others.
- Remember that love binds the body of Christ together.
- Let the word of Christ continue to teach wisdom.
- Do everything in the name of Jesus.
- Give thanks to God.

Day 5: Back on the Bike **Colossians 3:12-17** NRSV

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other, just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.