

DAY FOUR

Celebrate New Life

Morning Devotions

Location

Select an area of the camp that is high and overlooks a field or another area of natural beauty. To emphasize the point of the devotion, have the location look toward the east to see the rising sun would be ideal.

Scripture

Have a group of campers prepare earlier in the week to act out Mark 16:1-8 as the scripture is read. Be creative. You might use an earth ball symbolic of the stone. Period costumes would also enhance this activity, but even just cloth draped over the women's heads would add to it. The person playing the angel could be dressed significantly different in all white for instance, like a bed sheet, but don't get caught in the trappings of wings and halos.

To further enhance their experience, have all campers lay down on the ground. The spot should be dry you may wish to move this portion of the activity inside a dark building. A cave, basement, or storm cellar would be great. Have participants lay quiet and still for 30 seconds to see what it is like lying in a tomb. Afterward, have them jump to their feet and have them scream for joy, at being alive and having a relationship with Jesus Christ. If they are reluctant, explain to them to just act enthusiastic and demonstrate how acting this way leads to enthusiasm.

Music Suggestions

Have the group sing *Lord I Lift Your Name on High*, by Bob Stromberg from his album, *Songs Along the Way*.

God's Wake-Up Call

Ask campers when they have "seen" Jesus at work in their lives or the lives of others. Relate to them such examples confirm the sometimes trite statement "Jesus Lives." Show them two crosses, one with

Jesus nailed to it, and one without. Explain how that in our faith we use the empty cross to symbolize not only the death of Jesus, but that of the resurrection, and how it demonstrates reconciliation to God. Ask campers to share how Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, or new life, shows us a better way and how we can respond to it.

Prayer

Have each member of the group share in prayer thanking God for showing us the way to reconciliation. Have one camper close with a special blessing on the day's activity.

Option: Consider having an early morning or sunrise campfire. It could be done as a surprise with staff waking up the campers at a predetermined time, and everyone coming to the activity as they are dressed (within reason, of course). Use "God's Wake-Up Call" as the end of campfire talk.

Suggestions for Classes

Offer a "New Life Celebration." This could be done in a festival atmosphere by setting up booths or learning centers at or near a central location. Have contemporary Christian music playing throughout the activity. Listed below are ideas for booths, or centers. If using a regular schedule, these ideas may be used in more traditional classes. Be sure to fly these out before doing them with campers.

1. *Decorate Easter Eggs.* To symbolize the rebirth associated with the resurrection, take eggs and remove the insides by piercing the top and bottom of the shell with a long, straight pin. Make sure to pierce the yoke. Explain how the piercing activity might be symbolic of Jesus' pierced hands and feet. Have participants gently blow into one hole of the egg. This is to

remove the content of the egg into a bowl or cup. This can symbolize having our sins “washed away.” Next, with acrylic paints, markers, or egg coloring, have campers carefully decorate the eggs. Place the eggs in egg cartons to dry.

2. *Eternal Life Christmas*

Ornaments. Using standard glass ornaments, remove the loop and metal edging from the top. Put one to two teaspoons of sand inside. Have campers gently shake the ornament in a circular motion until the sand removes the coloring. Caution the campers that sometimes the ornaments break be prepared that it could break in their hands. Have extra ornaments and a first aid kit available. Instruct campers immediately to throw away the ornament at the first sign of breakage. As the sand removes the coloring from inside the ornament, explain that this is symbolic of how Jesus’ death took away our sins. Empty the sand and carefully insert a small twig of evergreen. Explain how the evergreen symbolizes eternal life. Replace the loop and metal edging. If the camp has put up a Christmas tree for Day Two activities, have campers put their names on the bottom of the ornament with permanent marker and place them on the tree.

3. *Dance.* Demonstrate group dancing, such as the Israeli Hora, Native American dances, other national folk dances, square dances, or other dances that are celebrative in nature. Use your local resources or find the book *Square and Folk Dancing* by Hank Greene (Harper & Row, 1984).

4. *Gardening.* In cooperation with campground personnel, plant flower seeds, bulbs, or seedlings in an appropriate area. As a part of the activity, have campers make a sign that reads “New Life Garden” with each participant’s signature on the back. Put it up at the entrance to the garden. Encourage campers to care for it the rest of the week and each time they return to the

camp site. This idea has been included in the Junior High and Senior High Camp Helps as well. Coordinating the design to allow for participation by each camp may be helpful.

5. *Mancala.* Set up an area where campers can learn how to play this ancient game. The object is to remove all the stones, beans, seeds or nuts from their side before the other player. This game can be played with a variety of equipment using a board, cups, or even indentations in the dirt. If the game is unfamiliar, refer to *The World of Games* by Jack Botermans, Tony Burrett, Pieter van Delft, and Carla van Splunteren, (Facts on File, Inc., New York, 1989).

6. *Magazine Mania.* Have campers create magazine covers and write articles based on new life and resurrection. Provide magazines for them to use as a guide. Encourage campers to change the names and create headlines, ads and stories that might be included. Finished work could be included in the camp log.

Rolling Stone becomes *Rolling the StoneAway*

Life becomes *Eternal Life*

Sports Illustrated becomes *Spirit Illustrated*

The Wall Street Journal becomes *The (Apostle) Paul’s Street Journal*

Theme Class

Today’s class has two parts, preparation and presentation. Explain to campers that there is going to be a court trial in which the group will prove that Jesus has power over death. You will need to assign the following characters:

The Judge

The Prosecuting Attorneys (1-3)

The Defense Attorneys (1-3)

The Jury (12) - have them elect chair Bailiff

Court Reporter

Five witnesses as follows:

Character Witness: Peter

to witness of Jesus' character Expert

Witness: Lazarus

to witness of Jesus' power

Eye Witness: Mary to witness of seeing Jesus

Material Witness: Thomas to witness seeing

Jesus' scars Alibi Witness: Guards to witness of burial

Give participants approximately 10 - 15 minutes to prepare for their trial. During this time the following needs to happen:

The Judge needs to find suitable arraignment, select the jury, appoint a bailiff (to keep order and swear in witnesses - be sure to use a Bible and have the witnesses "promise" to tell the truth, rather than swear, if this might be offensive).

The attorneys need to prepare questions appropriate for their point of view — the prosecution should try to discredit the testimonies of the witnesses, with the defense trying to prove that Jesus has the power over death.

The court report should get some paper and pencil, or a typewriter, computer, or some other means for recording the events.

As much as possible, have the trial like one might see on TV, with a little humor. Have the bailiff say, "all rise, the honorable (name of judge), presiding." The judge needs to run the trial from this point. Without going into too much detail, the judge might need to be prepared for this role the day before. It will add a lot to the event if the judge is one of the campers, not a counselor or staff member.

Have a fun time, don't let things get too serious, and spend 10- 15 minutes debriefing everyone at the end. Did they prove that Jesus has the power over death? Why or why not? What could have been done differently? Can we actually prove it? Does it make a difference? Are our

testimonies based on "proofs" or on our "faith"? What's the difference? What is a five-star witness? (Someone who can be all five types of witnesses). Are you a five-star witness of Jesus Christ? (Review each type of witness and see if anyone is.)

Questions for Chats

1. What do you think about Jesus' resurrection? What foretold of it? (Old Testament prophecy, Lazarus' being raised from the dead, Jesus' own comments).

2. What significance does it have? How does this apply to your life?

3. How would things be different if Jesus hadn't been resurrected?

4. What's the difference between knowing something and believing something?

5. How would you try to explain Jesus' resurrection to someone if you had actually witnessed it? If you had heard the story from one of the first disciples? How would you explain it to a friend who hadn't heard about it today?

Evening Activity

Freedoms

6- 30 participants

Props: papers and pencils, one for each group

Introduce this game by asking the campers to imagine that each of them has been made a prisoner of Ancient Rome for being Christian and put into an isolation cell. "All your rights and normal pleasures have been taken away. But for propaganda reasons, and to show its great mercy, Caesar has decided to grant you certain rights and privileges, a new one each month. Which would you ask for first?" Campers are told they will be put into groups, and each group must decide its own rankings, from most important privilege to least important.

After three groups are selected by

count-off, hand out papers and pencils and ask one member in each group to list the following “rights.” (Lists may be made up in advance and a list handed to each group.) This list might include: the freedom to write letters, a choice of foods, books to read, freedom from brainwashing, the right to have one visitor a month. Groups are sent to separate areas to compile their lists.

As in all games where groups must reach consensus, this game offers insight into the peculiarities of group dynamics. Since different groups will invariably arrive at different rankings, campers will observe that in some instances the group is dominated by a single, strong personality, whereas in others democracy prevails. In a few instances two or three individuals band together to sway the rest. Explain that the end result is not too different from what happens in a jury room.

Adapted from Fun Games for Great Parties by Maralys Wills (Price, Stern, Sloan, Los Angeles, 1988), page 47.

Witnesses

10 - 40 players

Props. papers and pencils

Take 3 or 4 extrovert campers aside and ask them to go into another room and make up a 10-second mini-play. The little play can be about anything: a robbery, a murder, an accident, or any dramatic event, including a scene from scripture. It must be kept short and vivid.

When the actors report back, make sure everyone is seated before announcing that the group is about to witness an important event, to which they must pay close attention. Say, “You will be witnesses. Your testimony will be needed.”

The actors perform their little scene for the benefit of others. Then the witnesses are told they have one minute to write down and describe what they saw.

Next, announce that the “police” have come and witnesses are to read their

statements aloud. One by one, campers fill the air with lies.

At the end it begins to seem that the group must have witnessed a number of different events. As is the case with so many eyewitness accounts, details vary so wildly that everyone’s credibility is tarnished. The game can be played one more time. But don’t let it go a third round. Keep everyone wishing it had lasted longer.

Adapted from Fun Games for Great Parties by Maralys Wills (Price, Stern, Sloan, Los Angeles, 1988), page 47.

Campfire Ideas

A morning campfire is suggested as a part of group devotions. You may wish to have an alternative activity this night, like a swim.

At an evening campfire, you may wish to have a very small fire at one sight that goes out, symbolic of life on earth, then using a high power flashlight at a nearby site, have the campers walk silently toward the light. This other light should lead them to a second campfire, symbolic of eternal life.

Another idea would be to play the game “Witnesses” above, during campfire, having a scene portrayed from from Jesus’ life after the resurrection his appearance to the Disciples, as an example.

Cabin Devotions

Begin the devotion while the cabin group is still getting settled. Ask them to come up with *The Top 10 Reasons* for believing in Jesus Christ. As they become quiet, have one camper read *The Death Doubt*, page 1095 from the *Youth Bible*, John 20:19-31. Use the questions at the end of the reading for discussion. If a *Youth Bible* is unavailable, read the story about Thomas (John 20:19-31) Talk about what it takes to believe. Focus specifically on verse twenty-nine.