

## 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**

Show campers two crosses or pictures of two crosses –one a crucifix with a figure of Jesus on it and one empty cross. Explain that in our faith we use the empty cross to symbolize not only the death of

Jesus, but that of the resurrection. This shows how we are reconciled to God. Show the campers some very large nails. Pass them around. Ask campers to imagine what it would feel like to have nails like these pounded into your hands and feet. Relate that the crucifixion was painful both physically and spiritually. Ask campers if they have ever felt pain. Help them to understand that through Jesus, we can be healed and live a life devoted to God.

#### **Prayer**

Have the group pray silently for thirty seconds. Then ask campers to share one word about how they feel about Jesus with the entire group. Have a camp leader 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. Campers and staff would come to the activity as they are dressed for sleeping (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 Stone Away*

*Life* becomes *Eternal Life*

*Sports Illustrated* becomes *Spirit Illustrated*

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

### **Theme Class**

*Supplies: paper pencil*

Have one camp leader take three or four outgoing campers into another room and make up a 10-second mini-play. The play should be about the story of Lazarus from John 11:1-44. It must be kept short and vivid, with quick talking and fast motion (like fast forward on a video).

Another camp leader should use this time to

make sure everyone is seated and pass out paper and pencils to each camper. Then announcement that the group is about to witness an important event, to which they must pay close attention. Tell them the legal authorities need their testimony in a court case.

Call the actors and actresses in to do their play. Then tell the campers that have one minute to write down what they saw without speaking to other campers. Next, announce that the “police” have come and witnesses are to read their statements aloud. As campers share, it will become evident that there are various accounts of the same event.

Explain that in the four gospels, the account of Jesus’ resurrection is different. Divide the camp into four groups with each group assigned one of the four gospels. Have the groups read their account and prepare a mini- play to do for the others in similar fashion at the first mini-play. Discuss the difference between the accounts:

- How could such a major event in Christianity have been recorded so differently?
- Why is each account true?
- Does it make a difference to you? Why?

*If a camcorder is available, tape the mini-plays for the campers to view later.*

### **Questions for Chats**

1. Do you believe everything you see in the movies or television? Why or why not?
2. How do you know if something really happened?
3. Even in Jesus’ time, people found it hard to believe that he had the power over death. Do you find it hard to believe? Why or why not?
4. What does it take to make you believe in something? Can you believe something just because others tell you it is true? Why?

5. The stories of Lazarus and Jesus’ resurrections point to the fact that Jesus had power over death. What does this mean to you?

### **Evening Activity**

1. *Have an Easter Party!* Decorate with flowers, posters, and Easter cutouts available at many party and paper supply stores. For party favors, fill small baskets with jelly beans or other Easter type candy if available.

2. *Make pretzels.* The pretzel dates back about 1500 years to southern Europe. The shape of a pretzel resembles a child’s arms folded in prayer. Christians first used pretzels as Lenten bread in the fifth century after the birth of Christ. Pretzels were used because the contained no milk or eggs that were forbidden during Lent.

*Instructions:* dissolve one package of dry yeast in 1 1/2 cups of lukewarm water. Add four cups of flour and knead. Form into a large roll and cut into half-inch pieces. Roll into ropes and twist into the shape of pretzels. Place on lightly greased cookie sheets and brush pretzels with a beaten egg. Sprinkle with coarse salt or other flavorings (onion, garlic, cheese) and bake fifteen minutes at 400 degrees.

3. *Easter Egg Hunt.* Using colored, hard-boiled or plastic eggs filled with coins, raisins, nuts, gum, candy or prize winning numbers, hide them either inside a camp facility or outside, weather permitting. Have campers hunt for eggs and place them in their baskets.

*Option A:* Spray paint the eggs different colors. Create a chart that lists points for each color. Give prizes for each color.

*Option B:* Use the eggs to create a scavenger hunt across camp. Have one clue in or on each egg which leads to the next egg.

#### 4. Egg Games.

- **Egg Roll:** Have campers roll hard-boiled eggs down a slope with either their noses

or spoons. The winner is the first one down the slope with an unbroken egg.

- **Egg Toss:** Divide campers into teams. Have campers toss hard boiled or raw eggs back and forth in relay fashion.

- **Egg Pass:** Divide campers into teams. Have campers pass a hardboiled egg from one person to the next by placing the egg under their chin.

5. *Easter Walk.* To close the evening activities and create a transition to campfire, explain the following and then walk to campfire:

*After the middle ages (1400-1500 AD.) the number of Christians continued to increase. A custom evolved in which Christians would take an "Easter Walk" after the morning worship. The procession of people would go through the town and into the fields and forests with a leader carrying a lighted candle. The group would stop to pray and sing hymns at designated spots. Tonight we are walking to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ in a similar fashion.*

*Option 1:* Have the leader carry a big candle to light the campfire. Have campers early their flashlights. Stop along the path to pray two or three times and to sing songs.

*Option 2:* As a part of the process have the campers walk to their cabins, change into

their swimwear, and go to a night swim, or another recreation activity

## **Campfire Ideas**

If using the morning devotion's campfire option, an alternative activity this night, like a swim, might be appropriate. At an evening campfire, have a very small fire at one sight that goes out, symbolic of life on earth. Using a high- powered flashlight at a nearby site, have the campers walk silently toward the light. The other light should lead them to a second campfire site, symbolic of eternal life.

## **Cabin Devotions**

Begin the devotion while the cabin group is still getting settled. Ask hem 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.