

MISSION HANDBOOK

2010

# UNDESERVED

Group Workcamps



GROUP  
WORKCAMPs  
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## YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS

**Say:** We don't use the word "prodigal" very often. But conveniently, the definition of the word is on the back of our handbook. Would three people volunteer to read the three definitions on the back cover?

**Ask:** Does anyone have any questions about what those words mean?

**Ask:** With all three definitions in mind, how have we as a youth group been "prodigal" – in good ways, bad ways, or anything in between?

**Say:** There's one person in the story of the prodigal son that we're going to focus on during youth group devotions – the father. He's a fascinating character in that it seems that he has endless tolerance, patience, forgiveness, and love for his children. And that's exactly what God the Father has for us. It's summarized in this verse from Ephesians 3:18. Would someone read it for us?

And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.

**Ask:** When was a time that you felt God's prodigal love like that verse describes?

**Say:** God is going to do some amazing things this week in each of our lives. And, we'll see how the words "prodigal" and "undeserved" can become part of our faith story and the story of our youth group. Before we cover some announcements, let's go to God in prayer and give everything about this week to him. As I prompt you, pray silently to God for a few moments about each item I mention. Let's pray.

Thanks, God, for a safe trip to camp and the chance to serve people and share what you are all about. Hear us as we each pray for...

the people on our crew we just met tonight,  
the people we'll begin serving tomorrow,  
our youth group as we experience this week together,  
ourselves, as we open our hearts to you.

Thanks for being so prodigal in your love towards us, and help us to be the same to you and to others. In Jesus name, Amen.

## CREW DEVOTIONS



# MYSELF

### WARMING UP

Find a good, relaxing spot to have devotions, and circle up. Open crew devotions in prayer.

**Say:** Our first challenge is called the Big 10. We've got to figure out 10 things that we all have in common that don't have something to do with this mission trip. Before we get started, there are a few things we can't include in our list. No body parts (as in "we all have arms") and no clothing (as in "we all wear shoes"). Our list could be things we like to do, places we've been, or anything else. Starting with the Break Maker and going around to the left, share two or three ideas, and we'll see what we can come up with. I'll take notes.

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Keep working at it until your crew has a list of ten. Then, give out some well-deserved high-fives and move along.

### GOD SIGHTINGS

**Say:** Each day during devotions, we'll share God Sightings. A God Sighting is some way you've seen God at work. It could be something with our crew, something you've personally experienced at camp, or something with our resident, your youth group, or anything else. Who has God Sightings for today?

Share God Sightings as a group.



## CREW DEVOTIONS

## MYSELF

**Say:** In our devotions each day we'll dig into our theme in a creative way. There will be some ideas to think about, a few verses to read, and then something to do—with the actual page—and it includes tearing that page out. And there are lots of questions, too. So when we come across a question, we'll pause to share our answers. We'll figure out the rest as we go. Everyone ready? Today's theme is "Myself." Let's see what God has to say about each one of us.

**Say:** It's Monday and there are a bunch of people that you're just now getting to know a little about. And maybe by the end of the week you'll be exchanging cell phone numbers or even referring to a member of our crew as a friend.

**Ask:** How long does it take to really get to know someone? Think of someone you know really, really well. There's probably still something about that person that you're not quite sure about, right?

**Say:** While we're talking about getting to know people, let's meet Wally and Shirley. They are real people who live in Colorado. They go to church regularly, and recently celebrated 60 years of marriage. When some younger guys asked Wally how he kept it fresh for so long, he responded that he never stopped finding something new about his lovely wife.

Even after 60 years in a close, intimate marriage there is still room to learn more about others. Thankfully we don't have to wait on God to get to know us.

Read aloud Jeremiah 1:5:

*"I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations."*

## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Say:** Not only does God know all there is to know about us, he has plans for us. There's something new every day to be learned about God. And with every moment we spend with him there comes a new observation about the plans he has for us. It's a daily soak in his vast and intimate love for us. Plus, as we learn those things, we learn more about who we really are—and who God really wants us to be.

**Say:** To help get you started in thinking about your “real” relationship with God and who you really are, answer these questions on your paper. No one else will ever see the answers you write. (Allow time for writing.)

1. What kind of person am I when no one is looking—what are some words that describe me? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What do I think about when I'm totally alone? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How often do I think about God or talk to God or talk about God in my life? Circle one: All the Time Sometimes Occasionally

Then explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_

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## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Say:** Wally died a couple of years ago and Shirley would tell you that no one will ever know her the way Wally did except for God—who is the only one who knows just how deeply she misses Wally. Wally learned to love Shirley through countless hours of prayer and his disciplined efforts to read his Bible and talk with God. The more time he spent with God the more things God showed him about Shirley. Wally was not a famous man as the world defines famous. He didn't have a lot of money or live in a big house, and he never made it on a reality show. It's quite possible that by knowing who God was in his life he learned that God's plan for him was to passionately love his wife for 60 years. And from Shirley's perspective—what a perfect plan.

**Say:** So here's what we're each going to do.

**TEAR OUT THIS PAGE.** (Pause)

If you've learned something new about God recently, write it at the bottom of the page. If you have some new insight into God's plan for your life, write it at the bottom of the page. Then fold the page up until it's credit-card size. (Pause) Open your hands and put them together in front of you like you're forming a cup with them, and put your folded paper there in the cup. (Pause) Now close your eyes and spend a few moments making your heart more receptive to God. Don't talk, just listen to what God has to say to you. (Allow time.)



## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Say:** Now, take your folded page and keep it with you for the rest of the week. Put it in your pocket, tuck it under your air mattress... whatever. Keep it with you every day this week, and when you see God moving and working in your life, write what you experience on this page. Before you go to bed at night, pull out this page and review what you've written—remind yourself to plant trust in God in your heart. When you wake up in the morning pull out this page and review what you've written—remind yourself to look for ways God will reveal something new about his plans for you. Everyday. That's being the best “Myself” that you could ever be.

**Say:** Let's close in prayer. (Devotion leader closes in a brief prayer.)

## YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS

## MYSELF

**Say:** We made it through our first day! Hopefully we've experienced a little of what's **Undeserved** about this week. Tonight, we're going to start by sharing the Undeserved and the Unexpected. It's a time to share about what was undeserved and unexpected, in either good or bad ways, or maybe in between. Let's talk about the day. Who wants to start?

(Allow time for sharing.)

**Say:** Sometimes on the first day the project looks like something you'll never be able to do, or it may seem like your crew won't work out so well. But you might be surprised how things turn out by the end of the week, especially with God's help.

Let's pray, thanking God for the great moments and asking for help with the challenging ones. Open your group in prayer.

**Ask:** How many of you have ever asked your parents for money? What are the reasons why they might say yes or no to you?

**Say:** I'd like us to think back to tonight's episode of Meet the Prodigals. The son asked his father for an early cash-out of the inheritance. Back in those days, that meant a lot more than just asking for some money to go the movies or buy something you wanted. When the son asked for the inheritance like that, it was like saying, "Are you dead yet? Can we just pretend that you're dead so I can have the money?"

**Ask:** How do you think *your* parents would respond if you had that same conversation with them?



## YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS

**Ask:** What do you think were the father's feelings in the Prodigal Son story?

**Ask:** With all that in mind, in what ways do you treat God the same? And how does God feel when you treat him that way?

**Say:** We were all asked a question tonight... *What's one way your life would look different if the only voice saying "Me" was from Jesus?* Would anyone like to share their response to that question?

**Say:** Let's answer that question as a youth group. How would our youth group be different if the voice we heard saying "me" was exclusively coming from Jesus? As we discuss that question, let's be as specific as possible – about how we could be different here at camp and when we go back home. (Have someone take some notes so you can refer back to what God has shown your group tonight.)

**Say:** Let's get in a circle. We're going to have an open time of sentence prayers. It's okay to say a few, or none at all. We just want to talk to God about what we've been sharing, or any other requests. Anyone can start, and I'll close when it seems right. Let's pray.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Variety Show audition forms have to be signed by an adult in your group who has seen the act and approves it. The forms are available in the camp office and are due back there by 5:00 p.m. tomorrow. Auditions are after the program tomorrow night.

Don't forget that you can add to the food pile as the week goes on.

Share announcements related to your group.

**Have a great night!**

## CREW DEVOTIONS

## MY FRIENDS

## WARMING UP

Have a volunteer open in prayer.

**Say:** We want to hear some stories about our friends. Let's take a minute to think of the craziest (or weirdest, or funniest) thing that's happened when you were with your friends. (Pause) Now let's hear some stories....

## GOD SIGHTINGS

So...who has any God Sightings to share today?

## MY FRIENDS

Remember the movie Toy Story? Woody and Buzz experience a rough introduction but eventually—over time and after some real hardships—grow a friendship. The song that plays over the closing credits sums up their friendship. Let's read them—or how about we sing the song?





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*You've got a friend in me  
You've got a friend in me  
When the road looks rough ahead  
And you're miles and miles  
From your nice warm bed  
Just remember what your old pal said  
Boy, you've got a friend in me*

*You've got a friend in me  
You've got a friend in me  
You've got a friend in me*

*You've got troubles, well I've got 'em too  
There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you  
We stick together and we see it through  
You've got a friend in me  
You've got a friend in me*

*Some other folks might be  
A little bit smarter than I am  
Bigger and stronger too  
Maybe  
But none of them will ever love you the way I do  
It's me and you  
And as the years go by  
Boys, our friendship will never die  
You're gonna see  
It's our destiny*

*You've got a friend in me  
You've got a friend in me  
You've got a friend in me*

**Say:** It can be hard to build a “Toy Story” kind of friendship when we live in a superficial and me-centered world, right? But it's worth the effort, because our friendships are like the air we breathe—we have to have them in life.

## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Say:** It's definitely a popular topic. Search for "friend" in iTunes and you'll find more than 4,000 song results. And it's important, too. People have surveyed teenagers to discover what's most important to them, and friends always land in the top three—every time.

**Say:** Even more, friends and friendships ooze through the pages of the Bible. Abraham became a friend of God. David had a friend in Jonathan. Jesus called the disciples friends and even forgave Peter, a good friend, after Peter denied knowing Jesus. Paul and Timothy were friends. And the question is posed to us—are you a friend of God?

**Say:** So... how do you identify a potential friend and how do you build a good friendship? Some signs of a potential friendship include: a mutual desire to get along, and perhaps a common bond of some sort. Of your 200+ Facebook friends, which of those are true friends, or could be? It certainly won't be all of them.

**Say:** A genuine, good friendship brings a shared sense of caring, a desire to see one another grow, and a hope for each other to succeed in all aspects of life. True friendships involve actions—doing something for someone while expecting nothing in return. But sometimes our self-sacrificing acts of friendship have a very high price.

Have someone read aloud John 15:13. *There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

**Say:** A good friendship takes time to build—it means your friend will stand by your side, even when you've done something wrong. A good friend will let you share your thoughts and secrets without fear of judgment or criticism.

A good friendship requires friends to honor some pretty heavy issues of trust. So it's super-important to know who you're calling friend. We're supposed to run to our friends.



## CREW DEVOTIONS

Have someone read aloud 2 Timothy 2:22. Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.

**Say:** We can't live a holy life alone. God's intention is for us to run from the things that are wrong—that destroy life—and run to someONE who can help us keep our focus on what's right. Friends. But not just any friend—a good friend who trusts God.

**Say:** Here's a question to just think about. If one of your friends needs to run from sin, would they run to you?

**Say:** Bottom line. What's one way to identify a good friend? The answer is found in Proverbs 18:24. Ask someone to read this aloud: There are "friends" who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother.

**Say:** In what ways does Jesus reflect this proverb in your life? In what ways does he not reflect this proverb in your life?

**Say:** Do I trust that God likes me? By nature he loves me, but do I trust that he likes me right here, right now, with all my flaws and weakness? Are we friends?

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**TEAR OFF THE BOTTOM PART OF THIS PAGE.**

In the space below re-write 2 Timothy 2:22 and make it personal.

"I will run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead I'll pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. I will enjoy the companionship of \_\_\_\_\_ who call on the Lord with pure hearts.

**Say:** Now spend some time praying for those you listed. Thank God for these good friends and pray that he will grow your friendship. And if you didn't list anyone, pray that God will help you fill in the blank starting even this week.



# MY FRIENDS

**Say:** Let's get started by talking about the experience that we just had during the evening program.

(The following questions are suggestions for processing the Wasted Stations. Use this time to make the most of what they experienced.)

**How did you feel while going through the stations?**

**Which station was most meaningful to you and why?**

**What was it like to get the warm brownie at the end? What did that mean to you?**

**Did anyone make any decisions or commitments tonight that they would like to talk about?**

**What did you realize about your friendships throughout today?**

**How can we help our own church and neighborhood build good friendships, and how specifically can we be a part of that?**

**Ask:** Does anyone have any Undeserved and Unexpected moments to share today? Allow time for sharing.

**Say:** Today's topic – My Friends – has given us a lot to think about. As you process everything, I want us to remember our friends who came with us on this trip – that's each other! So, we're going to take a few minutes to pray for each other. Beginning with the person next to me, we'll go around the circle and pray for the friend to our left with a brief sentence prayer. It can be long or short, or complicated or simple. After enough time has gone by, I'll close in prayer.



## CREW DEVOTIONS



# MY FAMILY

## WARMING UP

Ask a volunteer to open in prayer.

**Say:** It's family time! Let's talk about our families. Maybe we've shared some basic things already this week, but now we want to hear all about your family. Let's break up the details this way:

- Who makes up my family?
- What are they like?
- What's my favorite thing about my family?
- And what drives me crazy about my family?

## GOD SIGHTINGS

**Ask:** Who has God Sightings to share?

## MY FAMILY

**Say:** A dad gets laid off from his job as a steelworker when his son is only 6. What does the son remember? Nothing about the job—but everything about how the dad played with him for an entire week. Building forts. Getting dirty. Melting plastic cars over a fire. Good family memory,

**Say:** Maybe you remember family trips to the ocean. Camping in the mountains. Getting your first pet. Arguing with your parents and putting a fist through your bedroom door. Even stressful conversations about money. Or maybe you remember people hurting

## CREW DEVOTIONS

each other—emotionally, and maybe even physically. Or maybe you remember how others came alongside the victims of that hurt, surrounding them with love and support.

**Ask:** Everyone has some very vivid family memories—what are some of yours, both happy and sad?

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**Say:** You know those family vacation commercials—the ones with all the joy and laughing? They only get it half right. Living in a family is both beautiful and messy. And it doesn't matter who's in your family—parents and siblings, grandparents, adopted siblings, your church family, your youth group family, and friends who are like family—all of them have very messy moments.

**Say:** But even as messy as things can get, Proverbs 17:6 reminds us of the importance of family. Let's read it now: Grandchildren are the crowning glory of the aged; parents[a] are the pride of their children.

**Ask:** Are you proud of your parents or grandparents?

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

If Jesus invited himself over to your home, would you want your family there to meet him? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

**Say:** Family is a treasure, created by God from the very beginning to bind us together and give us a foundational community. Adam needed Eve and they both needed God. The very first perfect family, but not without messiness.



## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Say:** Today almost every TV sitcom or drama deals with the concept of family. We get jobs to support our families, and athletes retire to spend more time with their families. Family is so important that Jesus even paints a picture of heaven as a large house with lots of rooms for the whole family to live with him.

**Say:** Being a part of a family is worth celebrating in spite of the messy stuff. It's what binds us to something bigger than ourselves and connects us to nurturing relationships and stands up for us in the midst of the attacks we experience in life.

## TEAR OUT THIS PAGE.

Think about times in your life when it has felt like the world is beating you up and you've tried to face it alone.

When are you the loneliest? \_\_\_\_\_

What about those times when you face grief or anger? \_\_\_\_\_

## TEAR YOUR PAGE IN HALF.

Have the crew pass both halves to the devotion leader. Then have the devotion leader hold all the halves of paper and pray for the healing and protection of our families, and that our families would be bonded in Jesus, and that we would find joy in our family.

As the devotion leader prays, he or she should take the halves and start folding them together as many times as he or she can.

**Say:** With family, God binds us together and our families grow stronger. Now have someone try and tear these folded halves in half again. Get a few volunteers to try.

**Say:** That's what family is meant to be!





## YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS

## MY FAMILY

**Say:** Wow – what a day! We worked, had free time, cheered for the Variety Show, and experienced the program. Let's hear the Unexpected and Undeserved for today. Allow people to share.

**Say:** Let's join in prayer now, remembering all that we've just shared.

**Say:** We've been talking about our families today. Thinking back to Meet the Prodigals, what do you think the father in the story felt when he saw his family experiencing conflict?

**Say:** Our heavenly Father is the best parent we could ever have. A dream-parent, so to speak. He loves each of his children (that's us!) more than we could imagine. And he put us together with other people we call our family.

**Ask:** How has God responded to you and your family when there has been unresolved conflict?

**Ask:** What do you think God deserves from us regarding our families?

**Say:** The Family Tangle part of tonight's program was quite the experience! How many of you had a hard time getting untangled? After we were all untangled, the MC asked us to consider how we could make things right with our families. What are some of the thoughts you had about what you might need to say or write to someone in your family? I'm only asking you to share as much as you feel comfortable.

**YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS**

**Say:** In the back of our handbook on page 103 is a page that's for you to write a letter to someone in your family, right now. And here's how we'll do this:

- What you write is personal. No one else is going to read it.
- Your letter can be to anyone in your family, or even a group of people.
- Your letter can be short, long, or anywhere in between. Again, it's totally up to you.

**This is a chance to share an apology, a regret, or even words of truth that you need to share. Or, you could write to offer forgiveness to someone in your family for something they have done to you.**

**When you're finished, put the letter in an envelope (provided at camp). If you know the address and fill out the envelope, we'll mail these from camp tomorrow.**

**Or, you can keep it with you and deliver it in person.**

**If you feel like you're dealing with some really big issues, we're here for you. Come see any one of our youth leaders.**

**So now, let's write letters to people in our family. (Allow about 10 minutes, or however much time your group needs.)**

**Say:** (after the letters have been collected) **These letters will be mailed out tomorrow, which means they could already be delivered by the time you get home. How do you think your family will respond to what they read?**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

You only have two more days to write care cards.

If any high school graduates or adults would like more information about serving on Group Workcamps or Group Week of Hope staff next summer, talk to the office manager before camp is over.

Share announcements related to your group.



## CREW DEVOTIONS

## MY FAITH

## WARMING UP

Ask a volunteer to open in prayer.

**Say:** Before we get into our devotion time, let's share the best part of our week so far....

## GOD SIGHTINGS

**Ask:** What God Sightings have you noticed that you can share today?

## MY FAITH

**Say:** Look around the environment we're in for a moment. Identify something you think will most likely last a year before it dies, turns to dust, or ceases to exist. (Pause) Now identify something that may last 10 years. (Pause) What did you find? (Pause) Now, can you identify something that will last 50 years? 100 years? 1,000 years? How about 1 million years? (Pause) Now that you're probably down to dirt, rocks, and stars—seriously, what will last forever? (Pause) Even time itself will cease to exist one day.

**Say:** There are some things we all wish would last forever—like the kindergarten schedule that was so great when we were six years old. It was color...play...eat lunch...story time...nap...go home. That rocks!

## CREW DEVOTIONS

# MY FAITH

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## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Ask:** What's something you wish would last forever? Explain.

Read aloud 2 Timothy 1:9-10

*For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus. And now he has made all of this plain to us by the appearing of Christ Jesus, our Savior. He broke the power of death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the Good News.*

**Say:** God offered us something that would make it possible for you and I to live forever with him—it's called grace. The key to extending his grace—to his strategy to rescue us from the hopelessness of life without him, was Jesus. Jesus conquered death and now lights the way for us to live forever with God. Do you believe Jesus died, specifically for you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you believe God has told the truth about his love for you?

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**Say:** Faith is believing that God tells the truth. If you believe Jesus died for you, then you will live with Him—forever! So your faith, or believing God tells the truth, means that you trust what he's promised you will have from him—eternal life, but so much more.

What about right now? What's the benefit in your everyday life of believing God tells the truth? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Say:** We have lots of competing thoughts at war inside our brains, don't we? The pressure we feel to live for God or ignore him is just one aspect of the everyday battle between good and evil. Building a ramp for a physically challenged resident is a good decision.



## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Mentally undressing a fellow workcamper while building a ramp for a physically challenged resident is bad.**

**So how do we live a holy life every day, the kind of life God calls us to live in 2 Timothy 1:9-10?**

**Say:** We can't earn our way to eternity—God says there is nothing we can do to earn a seat next to him at his dining table. Because of our sin, the only thing we “deserve” is death. God's forgiveness is our grace. There is no sin he can't forgive. The consequence for our sins—the ones we've already committed and the ones we have yet to commit—has already been covered by Jesus.

**TEAR OUT THIS PAGE FROM THE DEVOTION BOOK.**

**Put some space between you and the other campers. And for the rest of this devotion, we'll be spending time with God on our own. Just keep reading along.**

As you find a spot to meditate also find something small that reminds you of what won't last. It might be a blade of grass, a nail, some saw dust, whatever.

**Ask Yourself:** How long will the object I picked up last?

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As you hold the object, think also about the pain or guilt that results from the sin in your life. God says he will forgive any sin, right now, if you confess it to him and leave it with him. Do you believe God is telling the truth? Spend a minute or two wrestling with this question.

As part of your prayer, wrap your object in this sheet of paper along with the pain, guilt, and the sin. Then, in faith, bury it in a hole—get rid of it. It's gone. Believe it.

(Devotion Leader: When it looks like everyone is finished, call the group back together.)

**YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS**

# MY FAITH

**Say:** Tonight's program was powerful, so let's talk about it. What do you think about the father's response to the prodigal son?

**Say:** Jesus shared the story of the prodigal son so we might know that God the Father wants to respond to us the same way and extend the same undeserved forgiveness – if we'll simply receive it. But we can't if our fists are clenched tight.

(The following is a suggested discussion guide. Large groups are encouraged to break into smaller groups for at least the first three questions so that everyone gets a chance to share.)

**Ask:** Thinking back to your clenched fists, and using just one word, what are you still hanging on to?

What were you feeling when your fists were clenched tight?

After tonight, who is Jesus to you? Has that changed today because of something God did inside your heart?

Do you feel like you deserve a ring from God? Why or why not?

What's keeping you from accepting one?

Are there any decisions you made tonight that you'd like to share?

**Say:** Our theme this week is **Undeserved**. Thinking about everything you've experienced so far this week, why do you think that word was chosen for the theme?

**Ask:** Now that we've received this undeserved, good news, how can we pass it along both here and when we get back home? Let's try to be specific. Can someone take some notes?

**YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS**

**Say:** We're going to close in a time of open prayer, with our eyes closed. If you have a new – or renewed – perspective on your relationship with Jesus, I'd ask you to offer a simple prayer that begins with, "Jesus, you are..." and then fill in the rest of that sentence however you'd like. You can go into a lot of detail if you want, but there's no pressure to do that. After we've prayed for a while, I'll close. Let's bow our heads and pray.

Allow plenty of time for this to develop. Don't be afraid of silence.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Since tomorrow is the last day, don't forget to return any borrowed tools to the tool room or to the person you borrowed them from.

Quartermasters need to return ladders to the tool room.

Don't forget to pick up your group's ladders from the tool room tomorrow night.

Organizers need to turn in your first-aid kit tomorrow when you get back from working.

Share announcements related to your group.

Have a great night... one more day!



## CREW DEVOTIONS



# MY FUTURE

**NOTE:** Devotion Leader – you'll need some matches for this devotion, to be used outside under strict adult supervision.

## WARMING UP

Ask a volunteer to open in prayer.

**Say:** Can you believe it's our last day? What a week! Let's take some time and look back on our time together this week. When you go back home, what ideas or memories will stick in your mind the most? (Allow time for sharing)

## GOD SIGHTINGS

**Ask:** What God Sightings can we share today?

## MY FUTURE

Read aloud Jeremiah 29:11:

*For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.*

**Say:** On Monday we took a look at Jeremiah 1:5—remember, we were reminded that God knows us before we're born. Before we generate even a single opinion about who God is, he knew us. He even set a plan for our life before our life even started.

## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Say:** Today we read in Jeremiah 29:11 that not only does God have a plan for our life, but his plans are full of hope—he has a really good plan!

Can you embrace the truth that God really loves you and is ready to pour on the good stuff in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

Or do you get hung up trying to control things for yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

**Say:** You've done a good thing this week. You acted on faith and served others. And you've experienced satisfaction through what you've done. It has a fulfilling quality to it.

But what about tomorrow? What happens then? It really comes down to the faith question again. Do you believe God is telling you the truth? Do you believe he has plans to give you hope and a future? If you answered yes, the Proverbs 16:3 and 16:9 tell us what to do next: Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans will succeed. We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.

**Say:** These scripture passages are not formulas we use to manipulate God—they're principles or threads of truth that weave through our life. If you focus on what God wants more than what you want, then your decisions will naturally line up with his desires. Plans succeed because they reflect God's goals. It's about obeying him.

**Say:** So what about tomorrow and the next day and the next? Tear out this page. (Pause) Now tear the page in two lengthwise. On the left piece of paper write out a dream or two you have for your future. (Allow time for them to do this) Tuck this page in your Bible and refer to it often. If you are trying to follow God as you fulfill these dreams you'll need to spend time reading your Bible—it's the perfect reference point.

## CREW DEVOTIONS

## FUTURE DREAMS

## PLANS TO FULFILL THOSE DREAMS



## CREW DEVOTIONS

**Say:** On the other strip of paper write down some steps you think you need to take to fulfill your dreams—college, grades, money, connecting with the right people, whatever.... (Allow time for them to do this)

When everyone is done writing, collect the strips and give them to the devotion leader. As the leader collects the strips he or she should ask permission to share, out loud, the dreams your team members have.

Pray together and for one another. Lift each other up in prayer and pray for each of your futures. As you pray, the devotion leader should burn the strips.

**Then the devotion leader should say:** Let your plans go up in smoke, and let God determine your steps. Commit your dreams to God.

## DOING THE UNEXPECTED

**Say:** Now, let's present our gift to our resident.

(Or you can do this at another time that is best for your resident.)

Before you leave the work site today join in a closing prayer as a crew, and include your residents, if possible.

## YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS

## MY FUTURE

**Say:** It's our last time to share the Unexpected and the Undeserved. So let's hear it – for today and the whole week in general.

Allow time for people to share.

Let's pray, remembering the things we've just shared.

**Say:** While you've been working on your assigned projects this week, your crew was also working on another assignment called "Doing the Unexpected." Let's share about that. What did you do for your residents, and how did they react?

**Say:** When we do the unexpected in Jesus' name, people's reactions are often equally surprising. We just aren't used to getting something that we didn't pay for or earn. So what you did for your residents this week is really a glimpse of what Jesus did for you. That's what being "prodigal" is all about. Can someone read the second and third definition of "prodigal" that's on the back of our Mission Handbook?

**Say:** That's a God-kind of prodigal. We've seen an amazing example of that in the father character of the prodigal son story. Let's read some of the key verses about the father from that story...

The younger son told his father, "I want my share of the estate now before you die." So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. (verse 12)

So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. (verse 20)



## YOUTH GROUP DEVOTIONS

But his father said to the servants, "Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found. (verse 22-24)

His father said to him [the older brother], "Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found! (verse 31-32)

Let's keep those verses in mind as we work through the next three questions.

**Ask:** Did the father's response to both of his sons change or stay the same throughout the story? Why do you think that was the case?

**Ask:** Do you feel that God has treated you the same or differently throughout your relationship with him? Why?

**Ask:** It is often said that *God deserves our best*. Do you agree with that? Why or why not?

**Say:** If God does deserve our best – just because of who he is and what he's done for us, that would include our future – which starts right now. You've spent a lot of time today hearing about and thinking about your future. Let's dream a little – what would your future look like if you let God guide it 100%?

**Ask:** What things are stopping you from letting him do that?

**Ask:** Do you think you can allow God to be in control of *some* of your future? Why or why not?

**Say:** Well this isn't the end of the trip. It's really just the beginning of whatever is coming next. So what do you think that is for our youth group? In other words, what could our group do – or do differently – when we get back home that would reflect the Undeserved week we've had at camp? Let's be specific, and would someone take some notes?

**Say:** It's time for what might be our final prayer together at camp. Let's thank God for this incredible, Undeserved week.





# UNDESERVED

The Story of the Prodigal Son  
Luke 15:11-32

## **prodigal** (prod-i-guhl)

*-adjective*

1. exceedingly or recklessly wasteful
2. extremely generous; lavish
3. extremely abundant; profuse