



COME TO THE WATER

PASSPORTkids's Guide to Successful Church Group Devotions!

What is a Church Group Devotion?

A Church Group Devotion is an intentional time at the end of each day for your church group to come together and reflect on the day's activities and the lessons produced. Your group has been spread out with the rest of the camp community much of the day; now is the chance to come back together. This time is designed to concentrate solely on your group, their dynamics during the week, and how God is working individually and corporately. If you have been bringing groups to PASSPORTkids for a while, you will notice this is a change from recent years. This time will replace the Worship Response time and the Bedtime devotions. We hope Church Group Devotion time helps connect your students to each other, to your adults, and to the scripture stories each day of camp.

Church Group Devotion guides have been provided to help you with the process. They contain intentional links to the other parts of the PASSPORT day to bring continuity to your group's experience. Please feel free to use them as you see fit. Use part, all, or none of the guides. It is totally up to you. The key is to have a spiritually fun time connecting as a group!

About the writer: *Our Bible Study curriculum this year and this Church Group Devotion Guide were written by Sara Smith. Sara is the Minister to Children and Families at Knollwood Baptist Church in Winston Salem, NC.*

Preparation

Feel free to print this document and bring it to camp with you, making any notes you may need. You will also receive a link to this document each night after worship through the Remind system. Here are some thoughts as you prepare:

1. You will be assigned a location for your Church Group Devotion at Registration. You may decide to have a Church Group Devotion outside, but be aware that some groups may get done before you and be a distraction for your group.
2. Feel free to make your meeting space your own, but leave the space as you found it and dispose of all your trash. Your room will likely be used as a Bible study room or college classroom the following morning.
3. You may burn a candle if you'd like. Please do so with care and clean up any spilled wax.
4. Dorm rooms are not appropriate places for a Church Group Devotion, as girls are not allowed in boys' rooms (and *vice versa*), and the rooms are usually too small to gather.
5. Review the morning devotion and Bible Study outline for the day, and see if some of the questions could be further reflected upon that evening.
6. Perhaps a snack one or two evenings will keep the "hungries" away.
7. Please be aware of the noise level of your group and be respectful of other groups.
8. It can be a good idea to play a guitar or use a CD player to provide background/praise music for your devotion.
9. If you plan to play any games, consider going outside to avoid disturbing another group.

PASSPORT 2024

Church Group Devotion Guide

Night One: Come to the Water

Starters

- Introduce “church group devotion” (CGD) time to your children by saying something like this: *At the end of each day, our group will have an opportunity to be together as a church group after being scattered for most of the day. This is a chance for us to share about the day, learn from each other, and hear what God is doing in our lives. Starting tomorrow night, I’m going to ask you to share a “highlight” (something that was really great) and a “lowlight” (something that was not so great or disappointing) from that day. Look for something you can share in church group devotion tomorrow night.*
- On a **post-it note**, have campers write their name & one thing they want to accomplish or experience this week at camp (make sure to buy these ahead of time and bring them with you to camp). Collect the Post-it notes and use them as guides to pray for your students during the week. These will also help you see what parts of camp each camper looks forward to most. You might want to divide them among the adult leaders from your church group and encourage the adults to get to know these specific students more.

Large Group Sharing

1. What do you think you’ll love most about camp this week? (*Hanging out with my Bible Study group, being in the Variety Show, playing games at the Rec Party, going to worship each night*)
2. What fears do you have about the week? (*homesickness; cafeteria food; that I won’t make new friends; won’t be accepted in my Bible study group; that it is too hot*)

Group Leader(s) Shares...

Share your own expectations for this week. Share openly what you pray this week will be for your group. What will challenge *you* the most? What have you prayed would be the best part of camp for your group at PASSPORTkids? What fears do *you* have? (Your children will respond to your passion, even if it’s not visible on their faces.)

Closing

All of you who are thirsty, come to the water! Isaiah 55:1a (CEB)

The first day of camp has been filled with getting to know new routines and getting to know one another. Campers are also getting to know their faith in God and what that means to them. They are coming to the water, and they are ready to drink.

Have campers share their Day One Declaration in their passports with the group as a way to hold one another accountable during the week. Then, pray together as a group to end CGD.

Housekeeping

Remind the campers that tomorrow night is Night Market, and share with them that they will learn about Togo, a country in West Africa. Explain that our Mission Offering we collect this week will support access to clean water in Togo and that we will learn more about that this week. Remind campers that if they are interested in being in the Variety Show on Day 3, screenings will be tomorrow during free time. Review tomorrow’s schedule in your passports.

Night 2: Float

Starters

- **Ask a few questions** to get campers to review the day. How are your Bible study groups? Who/What did you talk about in Bible study? What did you like about worship? Which rotations did you choose today? Did anyone try out for the Variety show?
- **Pray** that God will guide your group through this devotion time, bringing you all close together in a spirit of openness and sharing so that you will learn from each other and be encouraged.

Large Group Sharing

Ask individuals to share any **highlights** from the day with the group. It could be something that happened in morning devotion, Bible study, rotations, free time, worship, etc. Let several children have a chance to share. Encourage adults to share as well.

Call for individuals to share any **lowlights** from the day. Affirm honesty and openness. Allow children and adults to share encouraging words.

Small Group Sharing/Activity

Divide the group into smaller groups (3-4 persons) with an adult leader in each. Ask them to share answers to a few questions in their small groups. Create your own questions or choose from the following:

1. What is one new thing you learned today?
2. How do you think the disciples in the boat felt during the raging storm?
3. What storms are you facing in life right now?
4. How can you trust God to help you float and remain calm during your storms?

Have each small group work together to draw a picture of a boat on a piece of paper. Make sure they come up with a creative name for the boat! Then, come back into a large group and share the pictures and names of the boats. Remind the group that even amidst the biggest storms, God is a safe fortress (like a boat) that can help us float on the waves and keep us calm.

Closing

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when through the rivers, they won't sweep over you. Isaiah 43:2 (CEB)

On this second day of camp, we have fully taken the dive into learning more about who God is and how God can help us be calm in the middle of our storms. Tomorrow, we will learn about Jesus and what it means to drink from the "living water."

Have campers share their Day Two Declarations in their passports with the group as a way to hold accountability with one another during the week. Pray together as a group to end CGD.

Housekeeping

Make any announcements necessary. Remind children about the Night Market, what they should wear, and anything they need to bring. Talk again about the mission offering partnership for this summer and share with everyone how the mission offering will be taken up during worship the following night. Go over the schedule for the following day in your passports.

Night 3: Drink

Starters

- If your group is a singing group, start with a favorite song or end with one. Choose one of the songs you have learned in worship this week and sing it together.
- Pray for this time to be meaningful and inspired by the presence of the Holy Spirit among you.

Large Group Sharing

Share **highlights** and **low-lights** from Morning Devotion, Bible study, Rotations, free time, Worship, etc., as you did during night 2. This is also an appropriate place to invite your campers to share anything meaningful they may have learned or felt God telling them this week.

Today in Bible study, children discussed Jesus and “the living water.” Ask: *What does it mean to have or to drink the living water?*

Small Group Sharing/Activity

Divide the group into smaller groups (different from yesterday) with an adult leader in each. Ask them to share answers to a few questions in their small groups. Create your own questions or choose from the following:

1. What is one new thing you learned today?
2. Can anyone summarize the story of the woman at the well that you learned about today?
3. Jesus spoke to the woman when others would have ignored her. How would you have felt if you were the woman?
4. How can we share the living water of Jesus with others? (be their friend when others are not, show kindness, pray for people, invite them to church)

Have each small group work together to write a prayer on a piece of paper that thanks God for the living water of Jesus, how they can share the living water with others, thankfulness, etc.

Closing

All who are thirsty should come to me! All who believe in me should drink! As the scriptures said concerning me, Rivers of living water will flow out from within him. John 7:37-38 (CEB)

On the last full day of camp, we spent time learning about the amazing living water of Jesus and how we can share it with others. Before we leave camp to go back home tomorrow, we will learn about listening to what the Holy Spirit calls us to do in our communities and world as we dive back into our everyday lives.

Have campers share their Day Three Declarations in their passports with the group as a way to hold accountability with one another during the week. Pray together as a group by having the small groups share their small group prayers to end CGD.

Housekeeping

Remind children about check-out procedures and leaving camp tomorrow. Give any packing instructions or any reminders about what the morning will look like tomorrow. Go over tomorrow’s schedule in your passports.