

PASSPORTkids' 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 lessons. Your group has been doing many different activities throughout the day. Children were in different bible studies, choices, and free time activities with other church groups. You sat together during worship, but that time was designed for concentrating on God. Your Church Group Devotion focuses solely on your group, their dynamics during the week, and how God works individually and corporately.

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 PASSPORT experience. However, some of you are camp experts and have the devotion times down pat. As a result, these guides may not be for you. Please feel free to use them as you, the Church Group Devotion leader, 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!

You will be assigned a location for your Church Group Devotion at Camp Registration.

Preparation

We suggest spending time each day preparing for that evening's Church Group Devotion (CGD). Here are some thoughts in no particular order.

1. Use the provided guides in any way you choose. They have been designed to wrap up the daily PASSPORT theme.
2. Perhaps a snack one or two evenings will keep the "hungries" away.
3. You may invite a PASSPORT Staffer to administer your Church Group Devotion one evening. However, we suggest they stay only for their devotion time and then leave so your group can interact without any "outsiders."
4. Turn back to the morning devotion and see if there are some questions for thought that can be reflected upon that evening.
5. Feel free to make your meeting space your own, but make sure to return the furniture as you found it and dispose of all your trash. Your room will more than likely be used as a Bible study room or college classroom the following morning.
6. You may have a Church Group Devotion outside, but some groups may get done before you and be a distraction for your group. Try to find a quiet, isolated place.
7. Playing a guitar or using a CD player to provide some background/praise music for your devotion is often a good idea. Remember, though, that there may be another group in the room next to yours that will be distracted if your group is too loud.
8. It is a good idea to play any games outside so that your group doesn't disturb others in the rooms next to you.
9. You may burn a candle for your devotion as long as nothing flammable is kept near the flame and it is extinguished at the conclusion of your devotion. Make sure to clean up any spilled wax.
10. Dorm rooms are not appropriate places to have a Church Group Devotion as girls are not allowed in boys' rooms (and *vice versa*), and the rooms are usually too small for the size of your group.

Night One: Wide Open Spaces

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 in Bible study, rotations, and free time. This is a chance for us to share about the day, learn from each other, and hear what God is doing in each of our lives. Starting tomorrow night, I’m going to ask you to share a “high-light” (something that was really great) and a “low light” (something that was not so great or disappointing) from that day. It could be something that happened during morning devotion, Bible study, rotations, free time, worship, or wherever. Listen 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 challenge the adult leaders to get to know those students whose cards they have.

Large Group Sharing

1. What do you think you’re going to 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) 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

[God] stood me up in wide-open spaces; I stood there saved—surprised to be loved! - [Psalm 18:19a](#) (CEB), [18:19b](#) (MSG)

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 figuring out what their Wide Open Space looks like.

Have campers share their Day One Declaration 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

Remind the campers that tomorrow night is Night Market and share with them the country [Japan] they will be learning about and the opportunities they may experience. Talk with campers about the Mission Offering at the end of the week and who the Mission Offering is partnering with. Remind campers that if they are interested in being in the Variety Show on Day 3, that screenings will be tomorrow during free time. Go over the following day’s schedule in your passports.

Night 2: Space to Welcome

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

Call for individuals to share any **low-lights** 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. Name one way Jesus asked his followers to practice welcome in the text.
3. Why is it sometimes hard to be welcoming?
4. How are you going to practice WELCOME once you get home?

Have campers grouped in threes, depending on your number. In their groups, ask them to come up with a way they want to practice being more welcoming when they get back home. After a few minutes, call the groups back together and ask them to share what they talked about in their groups.

Closing

So reach out and welcome one another to God's glory. Romans 15:7 (MSG)

The second day of camp, we have explored what it means to WELCOME others in Jesus' name. It is our responsibility to practice being more welcoming, not because we want people to praise us or like us but because it is what Jesus wants us to do. Tomorrow, we will learn what it means to ACT out our faith.

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 that they need to bring with them. 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 following day's schedule in your passports.

Night Three: Space to Act

Starters

- If your group is a singing group, you may want to 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 **high-lights** and **low-lights** from Morning Devotion, Bible study, Rotations, free time, Worship, etc., as you did during night 2.

Today in Bible Study, campers learned about amazing women who ACTed at great risk to themselves because it was the right thing to do. *Ask campers what is one thing they learned from the women in Moses' story today.*

Small Group Sharing/Activity

Divide the group into smaller groups (that are 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. Who can retell the story of Moses' birth that you learned about today in Bible Study?
3. Name some of the ways the women in the story of Moses ACTed that made a difference for Moses.
4. How can we show love in action when we get back home?

Have each group come up with one way they want to commit to showing God's love by the way they ACT. Once they are done, each group can share with the larger group.

Closing

Little children, let's not love with words or speech but with action and truth. [1 John 3:18](#) (CEB)

On the last full day of camp, we learned what it means to show God's love through our actions. We can show we are Christ's followers not only with our words but most importantly by how we ACT. Tomorrow, before we leave camp to go back home, we will learn about authentic joy and how we can celebrate when we know we are loved by God and are willing to share that love with others.

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.