

# GET A LIFE

Camp Johnsonburg Summer Curriculum  
2003

Exploring the faith practices of:  
Prayer, Creation, Justice, Forgiveness and Choices

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Sunday Abundant Life --- **Life**

## Tips for Teaching Abundant Life

Begin with story “Life Just Isn’t” *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*, Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Kimberly Kirberger, Health Communications, Inc.: Florida, 1997, p. 140-141.

### What did [Jesus] do during his life on earth?

He called disciples to follow him. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, blessed children, befriended outcasts, required people to repent, and forgave their sins. He taught people not to fear, but to trust always in God. He preached the good news of God’s love and gave everyone hope for new life. (*Belonging to God: A First Catechism*, 1998)

### Introduction:

(As the campers arrive in unit and between swim checks and dinner, the group creates its covenant and spends some time getting to know each other. This is a good time to introduce Abundant Life.)

“This week we are going to be talking about LIFE! Our Bible Study is called ‘Get a Life!’ Has anyone ever said to you, ‘Get a Life!’? Well, this week, we are going to ‘Get a Life in Christ.’ But first we want to know more about your lives!”

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**Activity: Lifeline**

(Have the campers draw on the brown paper that covers the picnic table. Each child can create a lifeline describing important events in his or her life. Pictures can symbolize important events, what makes their lives great, etc. Encourage the campers to talk about their lifelines and then go on to the scripture and questions about abundant life.)

**Scripture: John 10:10 (NRSV)**

*I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly.*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

**Questions for staff:**

What is faith?

What is my faith in?

How does that make a difference in my life?

Is my life more abundant because of my faith?

What is abundant life?

What does abundant mean?

What are some of the negative uses of abundant life? (Unnecessary wealth, using up environmental resources, etc.)

What adds to the abundance of my life?

What takes away from it?

If you had to write your own "Life Just Isn't," what would you say life just isn't about?

What would you say life is about?

**Questions for younger campers:**

What makes life fun?

What makes life sad?

How does God make our life better?

How does our church community make it better? Or help us?

**Questions for older campers:**

What are the things that you like about your life?

What are the things that you don't?

Can you change them?

Can you think differently about them?

Have you ever felt like the boy in the story about the circus? (Read the story below first)

How does being in a relationship with God help us "not miss the circus"? (Read the story below first)

Our scripture says that Jesus came so that we may have more abundant life? What do you think that means?

What does abundant mean?

How does knowing about Jesus make our lives more abundant? Would our lives be abundant without Jesus?

(Use some of the "questions for staff" as your campers get older or more ready for these questions).

**Song (Opening Campfire):** “I am the Resurrection and the Life” (Words and Music by Ray Repp, K&R Music, 1967, *New Song: Leader’s Guide*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p.129.

**In Jesus’ Life:** Matthew 12:18-21 (Good News Bible)

*Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, the one I love, and with whom I am pleased. I will send my Spirit upon him, and he will announce my judgment to the nations. He will not argue or shout, or make loud speeches in the streets. He will be gentle to those who are weak, and kind to those who are helpless. He will persist until he causes justice to triumph, and on him all peoples will put their hope.*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

(Tell the campers, “Jesus’ life has a lot to teach us about the abundant life! This week, we are going to be talking about scripture and things that Jesus taught us to make our lives full of abundance. These are prayer, caring for creation, seeking justice, forgiving, and making choices. Get excited to ‘Get a Life’ this week!”)

**Story:** “The Boy and the Circus” (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, pp. 56-57)

(Tell the story. If there is not enough time, tell it at the campfire later. You can also use the story, “Life Just Isn’t” above.)

**Life and me...** (Have the campers write their reflections on the following questions)

- What I have going for myself (What I do well when it comes to life)...
- What I can do more of...or what I can do better (How God can help me)...
- Something new I learned today...
- Something (an understanding or action) that I can put into practice at home with family and friends...

**Close with prayer**

(This may be done by one counselor or camper, or may involve the whole group.)

**Additional material for today’s practice:**

**Quotes:**

“Preach the gospel at all times; if necessary use words.” St. Francis of Assisi

“Our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” St. Augustine of Hippo

“Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ’s compassion is to look out to the world. Yours are the feet with which Christ is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which Christ is to bless all people now.” Teresa of Avila

“To love abundantly is to live abundantly.” Anonymous

“There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.” Albert Einstein

“My life is my message.” Gandhi

“Live simply. Love generously. Serve faithfully. Speak truthfully. Pray daily. Leave the rest to God.” Unknown

**Stories:**

“Born to Fly” (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, pp. 48-49)

# Monday Abundant Life --- Prayer

## Tips for Teaching Prayer

A lot of people think that prayer is just for when we want something, when we're scared, when we want to thank God for something, when we are praying for someone else. But, start thinking about prayer as a way of life! Our abundant life is a prayer!

“Being with God: When do you feel most alive and open to God? Is it when you are walking, writing, being with friends, singing? Next time you engage in an activity you enjoy, ask God to be with you. See what it's like to do this activity as a prayer, noticing God with you as you write, play, sing, or whatever. How do you feel when you share something you love with God? How could this activity become a regular time of prayer?” (*Way to Live*, edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, 2002, p. 282)

### What do we do when we pray?

*When we pray, we adore God, we confess our sins, we give God thanks, and we pray for the needs of others and ourselves.*

### How did Jesus teach his followers to pray?

*He taught them the Lord's Prayer.*

### Why does our prayer end with “Amen?”

*“Amen” means, “so be it” or “let it be so.” It expresses our complete confidence in God, who makes no promise that will not be kept and whose love endures forever.*

*(Belonging to God: A First Catechism, 1998)*

### Opening prayer or time of silence:

(Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

### Introduction:

(“Jesus prayed in nature, away from others, but he also prayed with his friends, for his friends, and surrounded by his friends. He advised his friends to pray for forgiveness, to thank God, and to be in communion with God. How can Jesus' life advise us how to pray?”)

### Scripture: I Thessalonians 5:16-18 (Good News Bible)

*Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus.*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

### Questions for staff:

Do you pray?

Why or why not?

What does it mean that a prayer is answered?  
 Have you ever felt as if your prayer was answered?  
 Have you ever felt abandoned by God after praying?  
 What do you think is the purpose of prayer?  
 Do you think there are any emotional or physical benefits to prayer?  
 Did anyone teach you to pray?  
 If so, who taught you to pray?  
 What prayer did you pray when you were little?  
 Do you think you have to fold your hands, close your eyes, and bow your head to pray?  
 What are the other ways that you know how to pray?

### **Questions for younger campers:**

When do you pray? When you are scared? Happy? Sad? Thankful?  
 Have you learned a prayer at home or at church?  
 Do you want to share that prayer with the group?  
 How do you feel when you pray?  
 Do you think you can pray anywhere? On the playground? In your mom or dad's car?  
 At school? In the grocery store? Where else can you pray?  
 Does praying make you feel better?  
 Why do you think Jesus prayed?

### **Questions for older campers:**

Before you came to camp, when was the last time you prayed? What did you pray about?  
 Did you ask for something?  
 Under what circumstances do you pray?  
 What hunches or divine tuggings at your heart have you experienced lately?  
 You are online in a chat room about prayer and someone writes, "I don't pray because God never answers prayer" ☹. How might you respond?  
 Do you feel like God hears your prayers?  
 Did you use to pray more when you were younger?  
 Do you pray more now that you are older?  
 Do you ever pray before tests? About girls or about boys?  
 Have you ever prayed for someone else?  
 Have you ever felt like God hasn't heard your prayers?  
 Has anyone ever prayed for you? How did that make you feel?  
 (Use some of the "questions for staff" as your campers get older or more ready for these questions).

**Song:** "Lord, Listen to Your Children" (Words and Music by Ken Medema, Hope Publishing Co., 1971, *New Song: Leader's Guide*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council--PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 198)

(Teach and sing this now or at some other time during the day.)

### **Activities:**

1. Talk about the "Ways of Prayer":

(Use the “Ways of Prayer” list below to try a few different ways to pray. Which ways do the campers like? Do they want to try some of these ways of prayer? How can the unit try some of them together? Have some supplies on hand so the campers can try drawing, journaling, using prayer beads, etc. at this time.)

2. Telephone:

(Play a game of telephone. Sit in a circle, whisper a phrase into the first camper’s ear, have that camper whisper to the person next to him/her, etc. At the end of the game, the phrase will not be exactly like the one you whispered into the first camper’s ear. Explain to the campers that when we pray, a clear message goes to God! It’s not like playing telephone!)

3. Prayer List:

(Start a unit prayer list. What does each camper want the unit to pray about? Keep this list in the dining fly and use it to pray each day.)

4. Keep it going all week:

(Introduce different prayer practices during the week.)

**In Jesus’ Life:** Luke 11:1-4 (Good News Bible)

*One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” Jesus said to them, “When you pray, say this: ‘Father: May your holy name be honored; may your Kingdom come. Give us day by day the food we need. Forgive us our sins, for we forgive everyone who does us wrong. And do not bring us to hard testing.’”*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

**Story:** “Sharpen Your Axe” (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, pp. 180-181)  
(Tell the story.)

**Prayer and me...**(Have the campers write their reflections on the following questions)

**What I have going for myself (What I do well when it comes to prayer)...**

**What I can do more of...or what I can do better (How God can help me)...**

**Something new I learned today...**

**Something (an understanding or action) that I can put into practice at home with family and friends...**

**Close with prayer:**

(This may be done by one counselor or camper, or may involve the whole group. Since today’s practice is prayer, you may wish to use one of the prayer experiences listed for this time.)

## **Additional material for today's practice:**

### **Scripture:**

Romans 8:26 (Good News Bible)

*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.*

Philippians 4:6-7 (Good News Bible)

*Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking God with a thankful heart. And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.*

### **Quotes:**

"The great thing is prayer. Prayer itself. If you want a life of prayer, the way to get it is by praying... You start where you are and you deepen what you already have." Thomas Merton

### **Songs:**

"O Lord, Hear My Prayer" (Words and Music by Jacques Berthier, GIA Publications, 1985, *New Song: Leader's Guide*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA):Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 225.)

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (Joseph Scriven and Charles C. Converse, *Songs*, Compiled by Johann Anderson, Songs and Creations, Inc.: San Anselmo, CA, 1983, p. 146.)

### **Ways of Prayer:**

(Today and throughout the rest of the week, use some of these prayer experiences to help your campers learn about prayer.)

1. Pray while waiting (grocery line, traffic, red lights, waiting for parents to pick you up, waiting for younger siblings, waiting for the bus, during commercials, etc.)
2. How many people are in your family? How many friends do you have? Assign a family member or friend to each day of the week. Make sure to lift that person up in prayer at least one time on their assigned day. (For example: Sunday, Mom; Monday, Dad; Tuesday, Kristin; Wednesday, Jerry; Thursday, Aunt Sally; Friday, my best friend, Amy; Saturday, my teacher, Ms. Winter)
3. Toothbrush Prayer: If you brush your teeth three times a day, you can pray three times a day! Take the time while you keep your teeth clean to talk to God. Your teeth will be sparkling clean, and you will have spent great time with God!
4. Prayer Beads: Make a string of beads with as many beads as you want. As you pray, use each bead to thank God for something, ask God for something, lift someone else up in prayer, etc. When you have used up all of your beads, then you are done with your prayer. *Or* have each bead represent a different member of your family, or different friends or mentors. Add an extra bead to your prayer beads for someone who is hard to get along with. When you get to this bead, pray for God to help you with this person. *Or* add a bead to remember persons in the world who experience injustice. The possibilities are endless!
5. Drawing Prayer: Use crayons or markers and a piece of paper and draw what you want to pray for or about. Do you want to pray for your mom? Draw a picture of her! Do you want to pray because you are sad, angry, frustrated, glad, surprised, happy, excited, anxious, nervous? Draw what it feels like to be this way.

6. Simple Prayers: Repeat something over and over in your head. Is there a hymn that you learned when you were little, that you can sing over and over? (“Jesus Loves Me”, “Amazing Grace”, “Alleluia”, “Seek Ye First”, etc.). Or think of a phrase or word that you can repeat. (“God, you are my light and my shield, you are my light and my shield, you are my light and my shield.”) Some people say the Jesus Prayer (“Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.”) People have been saying this for about 2,000 years!
7. Life as Prayer: Think about your entire day as a prayer. When you get up in the morning, ask for God to be present in your life. Offer your day, what you say and do, as a prayer to God. At night, before you go to sleep, thank God for the day and for your life.
8. Direction Prayer: Turn your body North, and then South, East, and then West. As you are facing the different directions, pray for the people who live in each direction.
9. Exercise Prayer: Do you jog, swim, bike, walk, or dance? Pray while you do these activities.
10. Journaling: Do you keep a journal? Do you write about the things that frustrate or excite you? How about what makes you happy or sad? Share these things with God. Begin your journal entry with “Dear God”, and end it with “Amen”.
11. Angry prayer: Do you believe that you can tell God when you are really mad? Have you ever been really upset and wonder why God let it happen? Don’t clean up your prayers! You can get angry. God is all-powerful, and God can take it if we are angry.
12. Pray with Scripture: Pray a psalm, or take some time to read parts of scripture for your prayer time.
13. Take a walk with Jesus: Take a walk, and pretend that you are walking with Jesus. What would you tell him? What would you ask him?

# Tuesday Abundant Life --- Creation

## Tips for Teaching Creation

If at all possible, have TWG (Time With God) and Abundant Life outside today! Even if it's on the back porch of the dining hall! It will be important for campers to be able to marvel at the beauty of the earth!

Do your FGC (For the Good of the Community) today as an offering to God. In order to use what we have learned regarding Caring for Creation, take time before you begin your FGC to say a prayer and offer this work to God.

### Opening prayer or time of silence:

(Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day. Since today's practice is about creation, you might want to encourage campers to listen to the sounds of nature during this time.)

### Introduction:

("Jewish people at the time of Christ recognized two categories in the world: the Creator and that which the Creator fashions. So humans, animals, plants, and rocks all belong to the same category: creation. This view does not eliminate the caretaker role of humans. It simply removes humans from center stage and acknowledges that all God's creation exists for God." Would thinking of God at the center of creation change the way we talk with children about creation care? How might it affect our behavior?) (*Parent Trek*, Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi, Herald Press: Pennsylvania, 2001, p. 65).

"Instead of being motivated by guilt and fear over the future of human beings, we care for God's creation because it belongs to God and God made it good. God is at the center of our motivation." (*Parent Trek*, Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi, Herald Press: Pennsylvania, 2001, p. 66)

### Scripture: Genesis 1:26 (The Message)

*God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature so they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, and, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of the Earth."*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

### Questions for staff:

Do you believe God created the earth?

In what way do you think God created earth?

What does it mean that God left humans to take care of the earth?

Do you think about the earth and creation very much?  
 How do your actions reflect that?  
 Have you ever thought about your caring for creation as a religious thing? Have you ever thought about this as a connection with God?  
 Do you feel connected to the earth? What do you do in response to that connection?  
 Do you ever think of walking or biking instead of driving?  
 Do you recycle? Do you buy items made with recycled materials?  
 Do you litter?  
 Do you think any of this matters?  
 In the “In Jesus’ Life” passage, Jesus points out the beauty of the lilies. Do you ever take time to marvel at the beauty of creation?  
 Would you take more time to care for creation if you took more time to marvel at it?

### **Questions for younger campers:**

Look around and think about the fact that God created all of this!  
 How does that make you feel?  
 What is your favorite part of creation? Trees? Flowers? Butterflies? Leaves? Grass? The Sky?  
 What is your favorite thing to do outside?  
 What kinds of things can you do to preserve the parts of nature that you love?  
 The Genesis passage from scripture says that we are responsible to take care of the earth. How do you feel about this responsibility?  
 In what ways do you care for the earth?  
 What does your family do?  
 What does your school do?

### **Questions for older campers:**

(See questions for staff)

**Song:** “All God’s Critters Got a Place in the Choir” (Bill Stains, Mineral River Music, 1978, *New Song: Participant’s Book*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, p. 57)

(Teach and sing this now or at some other time during the day.)

### **Activities:**

1. Commercial:  
 (Imagine you have a one minute commercial spot at the Super Bowl halftime to teach kids about caring for creation. Get into small groups and make up these commercials, and then share them with the group.)
2. Skit:  
 (As a unit, act out the creation story. Let one person be the narrator, another be the voice of God (girl or boy, please!), one be the sun, the moon, the sky, etc. Use the story of creation in Genesis 1 for your skit.)

3. Nature Center:

(Visit the nature center today and look at the poster that describes all of the ways that you can be involved in taking care of the earth.)

4. Commitment:

(Each person can think of three actions that he or she can take in order to care for creation. Write them down. Create a covenant between yourself and God regarding these three actions.)

**In Jesus' Life:** Matthew 6:28-30 (Good News Bible)

*Look how the wild flowers grow: they do not work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers.*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

**Story:** "It Matters" (Jeff Ostrander, *Stories for the Heart*, Compiled by Alice Gray, Multnomah Books: Sisters, OR, 1996, p. 35.)

(Tell the story).

**Caring for Creation and me...**

(Have the campers write their reflections on the following questions).

**What I have going for myself (What I do well when it comes to caring for creation)...**

**What I can do more of...or what I can do better (How God can help me)...**

**Something new I learned today...**

**Something (an understanding or action) that I can put into practice at home with family and friends...**

**Close with prayer:**

(This may be done by one counselor or camper, or may involve the whole group.)

**Additional material for today's practice:**

**Scripture:**

Leviticus 25:23 (Good News Bible)

*The Earth belongs to God and therefore cannot be held perpetually.*

Deuteronomy 8:7-11 (Good News Bible)

*The Lord your God is bringing you into a fertile land---a land that has rivers and springs, and underground streams gushing out into the valleys and hills; a land that produces wheat and barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and honey. There you will never go hungry or ever be in need. Its rocks have iron in them, and from its hills you can mine copper. You will have all you want to eat, and you will give thanks to the Lord your God for the fertile land that he has given you.*

**Quotes:**

“We are not likely to fight to save what we do not love.” David Orr, *Earth in Mind*

“Teach us to walk the earth as relatives to all that live.” From a Sioux prayer

“The creation is quite like a spacious and splendid house, provided and filled with the most exquisite and the most abundant furnishings. Everything in it tells us of God.” John Calvin

“This we know: the Earth does not belong to man. Man belongs to the Earth. This we know: all things are connected. Whatever befalls the Earth, befalls the sons of the Earth. Man did not weave the web of life. He is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.” Chief Seattle

“Teach your children what we have taught our children, that the Earth is our mother. Care for it as we have cared for it and with all your strength, with all your mind, with all your heart, preserve it for your children, and love it as God loves us all.” Chief Seattle

“Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things. Look above you! Look below you! Read it. God, whom you want to discover, never wrote that book with ink. Instead He set before your eyes the things that he had made. Can you ask for a louder voice than that?” St. Augustine of Hippo

**Books to borrow:**

*Old Turtle* (Douglas Wood, Scholastic Press: New York, NY, 1992)

*The Lorax* (Dr. Seuss, Random House: New York, NY, 1971)

# Wednesday Abundant Life --- Justice

## Tips for Teaching Justice

Seek Justice for All: God wants all people to blossom and flourish, yet unjust social structures cause many to wither and perish. Seeking justice includes trying to be fair to people we meet and also working for fair treatment in society. God's justice means more than "balancing the scales" and making things fair, however. God's justice works through God's mercy, which gives human beings the freedom and the grace to live justly and mercifully with one another. (*Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, 2002, p. 100)

If you think that you are too small to make a difference, then think about that mosquito in your tent last night!

Justice: showing courage and willingness to stand up for what is right. Intervene in situations when a person is being hurt, bullied, or threatened. Seek outside help.

The words, "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream" (Amos 5:24), are often quoted within a setting that focuses on the subject of social justice. The book of Amos was written during an extremely affluent time for the land of Israel, sometime between 760 and 750 BCE. Along with this affluence came poverty. Amos uttered uncomfortable words to this affluent society. These words called in to question the use of Israel's affluence. He tells the people that the land is void of justice "because [they] trample on the poor and take from them levies of grain," (Amos 5:11).

### **I believe Jesus calls us---even demands that we act:**

- Not just to give a can of soup
- Not just to hand over our coat
- Not just to drop a coin in the cup
- But to do justice
- To take the next step

### **Justice asks the bigger question: WHY?**

- Why are there so many homeless?
- Why are so many children without a home?
- What is happening?
- Why are people discriminated against?
- Why are people silenced?
- When will it get better?
- Who will make a difference?
- How can I help? (*Connections*, Hunger and Housing Needs Committee Newsletter, Newton Presbytery, NJ, February 2002)

### **What else does the Holy Spirit do for the church?**

The Spirit gathers us to worship God, builds us up in faith, hope, and love, and sends us into the world to proclaim the gospel and to work for justice and peace.

*(Belonging to God: A First Catechism, 1998)*

### **Opening prayer or time of silence:**

(Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

### **Introduction:**

(Tell the campers that seeking justice requires courage. It's looking at the world through God's eyes to see where things need to be changed. One person can make a difference, but many people working together in community, and many communities working together in the world can cause radical results. Share with the campers that we all can ask God for strength to work for justice!)

### **Scripture: Esther (Paraphrase)**

*Esther was a very brave woman. She was chosen as Queen for the mighty King Xerxes, who ruled over Persia. She was an Israelite, but her cousin, Mordecai, made her promise that she would tell no one, for this could get her in trouble.*

*When Esther found out that Haman, the King's top advisor, had convinced the King to have all of the Israelites in the land killed, she decided to stand up for herself and for her people. Her cousin told her, "Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for such a time as this."*

*Even though Esther knew that she could be killed for approaching the King without being summoned, she invited him to two banquets. At the second banquet, she revealed her identity as an Israelite, and begged for her people to be spared. The King granted her wish. Esther and her people were safe.*

(Read this story from the camper booklet. Older campers may want to read the whole book of Esther to learn more about her story.)

### **Questions for Staff:**

Have you ever been the victim of injustice?

What does injustice mean to you?

Do you think that there is injustice in the world?

Do you think that there is peace without justice? What does that mean?

Do you think Jesus cared about justice?

What was his vision of justice?

Do you think most Christians understand what Jesus said about justice?

What injustices have you stood up for?

Esther's cousin, Mordecai, told her, "Maybe you have come to royal power for such a time as this." Have you come to power, or to leadership "for such a time as this"? What can you stand up for here at camp? At school? In your town? In your church/denomination?

**Questions for younger campers:**

Do you ever say, “That’s not fair?”  
 When do you say that?  
 Are your parents fair? Why or why not?  
 Are your teachers fair? Why or why not?  
 Do kids at school ever get picked on or teased?  
 Do you ever get picked on or teased?  
 Have you ever stood up for someone who is being picked on or teased?  
 Has anyone ever stood up for you?  
 How did that feel?  
 How did Jesus feel about people who were being picked on or teased?

**Questions for older campers:**

Have you ever seen anyone get picked on because of their religion, or because they were a boy or a girl, or because of the color of their skin, or because they came from another country?  
 Did you think that that was right?  
 What did you do?  
 What does Jesus ask us to do?  
 Who do you know who is really good at standing up for other people?  
 What kind of qualities does he/she have?  
 What would it take for you to be like Esther? What did she risk? What would you have to risk?  
 What can you do to stand up against economic, racial, class, and gender injustice in the world?

**Song:** “What Does the Lord Require of You” (Music by Jim Strathdee, Lyrics from Micah 6:8, Desert Flower Music, 1986, *New Song: Leader’s Guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 338)

(Teach and sing this now or at some other time during the day.)

**Activities:**

1. Skit:  
(Act out the story of Esther. Make sure the campers bring their Bibles for this!)
2. It’s Not Fair:  
(Choose a characteristic such as height or eye color and instruct everyone of that type to remain silent while the rest of the group briefly discusses a random topic such as reactions to a current movie. Then invite the silenced folks to share their feelings about the fairness of the process.) (*Way to Live Leader’s Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 100)
3. Health in the Village (for older campers):  
(Use this activity to illustrate health problems in developing countries. Begin with the entire unit standing up. Ask the group the questions in “Health in the Village” (see below). When all campers are seated at the end of the activity, ask them how they felt

during the exercise. Then ask them what actions our faith might call us to take in light of this experience.) (*We Can Do That!* Church World Service Hunger Awareness Activities, pp. 11-12)

#### 4. Sharing Food in a Hungry World:

(Use this activity to demonstrate global patterns of food distribution and population.

Divide the group into continents by percentage of population:

Asia/Pacific 57%, Europe/Former Soviet Union 17%, Africa 11%, Latin America/Caribbean 9%, North America 6%. Using bread or cookies, hold the food up and tell the campers that it represents all of the food for the world. Divide the food up according to the percentages eaten in the five areas: Europe/Former Soviet Union 45%, Asia/Pacific 18%, North America 29%, Latin America/Caribbean 6%, Africa 2%. Let the group distribute the food to its members. Note how this was done. Ask the campers how they felt about this and what might be done to equalize the distribution of food in the world.) (*We Can Do That!* Church World Service Hunger Awareness Activities, pp. 12-13)

#### **In Jesus' Life:** Luke 4:16-19 (Good News Bible)

*Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath he went as usual to the synagogue. He stood up to read the Scriptures and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people."*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

#### **Story:** Ida B. Wells

(Tell the story of Ida B. Wells, an African-American woman, who used her power to help her people.)

#### **Seeking justice and me...**

(Have the campers write their reflections on the following questions)

**What I have going for myself (What I do well when it comes to seeking justice)...**

**What I can do more of...or what I can do better (How God can help me)...**

**Something new I learned today...**

**Something (an understanding or action) that I can put into practice at home with family and friends...**

#### **Close with prayer:**

(This may be done by one counselor or camper, or may involve the whole group.)

#### **Additional material for today's practice:**

**Scripture:**

Micah 6:8 (RSV)

*What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

### Quotes:

“An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind...” Mohandas K. Gandhi

“The only justification for looking down on somebody is to pick him up.” Jesse Jackson

“The time is always right to do what is right.” Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Lord, to those who hunger, give bread. And to those who have bread, give the hunger for justice.” Latin American prayer

“Our mission is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.”

“Faith based charity provides crumbs from the table; faith based justice offers a place at the table.” Bill Moyers

“Love is mankind’s most potent weapon for personal and social transformation.” Martin Luther King, Jr.

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.” Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“When Oxfam was distributing food rations in Cambodia during the famine, hundreds of people waited quietly for their share. But when fish nets were handed out, the crowd cheered.” Joe Short

“The secret of the miracle of the loaves and the fish lies in people believing that sharing makes more, not less.”

“Be the change you want to see in the world.” Gandhi

“If we do not radiate the light of Christ around us, the sense of the darkness that prevails in the world will increase.” Mother Teresa

“When indeed shall we learn that we are all related one to the other, that we are all members of one body?” Helen Keller

“God communicates with us through all kinds of people. If we judge and dismiss people, we may miss important messages from God.”

“Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are.” St. Augustine of Hippo

“O Lord, I don’t want to be a spectator, a tour passenger looking out upon the real world, an audience to poverty and want and homelessness. Lord, involve me---call me---implicate me---commit me---And Lord---help me to step off the bus.” Freda Rajotte

“We have found the answer, and it is us.” Jim Lord

“When we place one hand into another, no hand remains empty.”

### Stories:

“Thermometers and Thermostats” (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, p. 198)

### Books to Borrow:

*Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez* (Kathleen Krull, Harcourt, Inc.: San Diego, CA, 2003)

*Horton Hears a Who* (Dr. Seuss, Random House: New York, NY, 1982)

*Martin’s Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Doreen Rappaport, Hyperion Books for Children: New York, NY, 2001)

**Songs:**

“We Shall Overcome” (Frank Hamilton, Guy Carawan, Zilphia Horton, Pete Seeger, Ludlow Music, NY, NY, 1963, *Songs*, Compiled by Johann Anderson, Songs and Creations, Inc.: San Anselmo, CA, 1983, p. 97)

**“Health in the Village”**

You are now a village in the developing world. You probably live in a country in Africa, Asia or Latin America. To show you the challenges that many people in the developing world face, I’m going to ask you some questions:

- Does anyone need glasses for reading? If so, raise your hand. Here you would probably be illiterate, because glasses are rarely available. Put your hand over your eye.
- Has anyone ever broken a bone in their upper body or arm? If so, raise your hand. Now put that arm behind your back. You’d have restricted movement because skills to set the break were in short supply and the bone didn’t heal right. A note on ratios of doctors to population: 1 doctor to 420 persons in the USA, 1 to every 7000 in the developing world, and 1 to 36,000 in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Has anyone ever broken a bone in their lower body or leg? If so, raise whatever appendage you have left. You might also be physically limited because the skills to set the fracture were in short supply and the bone didn’t heal right. Stand on one leg.
- Has anyone had diarrhea? An inconvenient discomfort for us, it is deadly for many in the developing world, especially children, where 1.3 billion people lack access to safe drinking water. You can sit down.
- Has anyone ever needed a blood transfusion to stay alive? None available due to lack of refrigeration and equipment. It was two days walk to the nearest hospital. You would likely die. You can sit down.
- Does anyone here know someone with HIV or AIDS? 80% of HIV positive persons live in the developing world with little or no medical treatment available. You can sit down.
- Is anyone here 58 years or older? In the developing world the average life expectancy is 57. In some countries it is much lower. You can sit down.
- Has anyone ever had major surgery, without which they would not have survived? Such surgery is often available only in urban centers. You would likely be dead. You can sit down.
- Has anyone here ever had mumps or measles? In the developing world, as often in our own inner cities, what for us are fairly benign “childhood diseases,” often kill those already weakened by malnutrition. You can sit down.
- Are you female? In many parts of the world, women eat only after all the men and children are fed, leaving women weak and much more vulnerable to illness. Their weakness leads to maternal mortality 18 times greater in the developing world than here. If you are a woman, sit down. (*We Can Do That!* Church World Service Hunger Awareness Activities, pp. 11-12)

# Thursday Abundant Life--- Forgiveness

## Tips for Teaching Forgiveness

It has been found that there is a direct correlation between forgiveness and mental well being. Forgiveness is NOT:

- Pardoning
- Condoning
- Excusing
- Forgetting
- Denying

Clinical Definition of Forgiveness: “Intraindividual, pro-social change toward a perceived transgressor that is situated within a specific interpersonal context.”

Steps of Forgiveness:

1. Acceptance of emotions (mad, sad, angry, disappointed, etc.)
2. Letting go of emotions
3. A shift of the way you feel about the person who hurt you
4. Start to understand the other person
5. Start to think differently about yourself and the other person

When counseling someone who has been hurt, it is extremely important not to suggest forgiveness too soon, for the person may have not fully worked through his/her anger and/or grief. (From *Forgiveness*, McCullough et al Guilford: New York, 2000)

Forgiveness Steps from the Learn Well Forgiveness Institute <[www.forgiver.net/forgive2.htm](http://www.forgiver.net/forgive2.htm)> 6/03

1. Acknowledge the anger and hurt caused by the clearly identified specific offense(s)
2. Bar revenge and any thought of inflicting harm as repayment or punishment to the offender.
3. Consider the offender’s perspective. Try to understand his/her attitude and behavior.
4. Decide to accept the hurt without unloading it on the offender. Passing it back and forth magnifies it.
5. Extend compassion and good will to the offender. That releases the offended from the offense.

Ephesians 4:31-32: “Let all bitterness, wrath, and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with malice. Be kind to one another, gentle and tenderhearted, lovingly forgiving each other just as God in Christ has forgiven you.”

Praise campers when they are able to say they are sorry, but avoid forcing them to apologize.

\*\*\*Please be mindful that this practice may open some past wounds for campers. Listen to what your camper has to say, and, if necessary seek help through your age group director, program director or chaplain.

### **Opening prayer or time of silence:**

(Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

### **Introduction:**

(God created us so that we could be in relationship with God and with other people. When something happens that causes brokenness between us, we have to learn to name it and then let it go. If we don't mend these breaks, we wind up carrying heavy burdens that continue to weigh us down and interfere with other relationships as well. Forgiving is hard, but, with God's help and God's forgiveness, we can move on.) (*Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 94)

### **Scripture:** Luke 15:11-32 (Paraphrase)

*In the story of the Prodigal Son, the youngest son asks for his half of the family inheritance, leaves home, and goes off to squander his money. Soon he runs out of cash and must get a job feeding pigs. When he comes to his senses, in the middle of a pigsty, he decides to go home and ask to be one of his father's servants. While he is still a far way off, his father sees him coming. The father runs to his son, puts new clothes on him, places a ring on his finger, and orders a large party, because the one who he thought was dead, is alive; his lost son is now found. The older brother, who has worked hard on his father's farm for years, becomes jealous and angry. But his father says, "Son, you don't understand. You are with me all the time. Everything that is mine is yours. But we have to celebrate. Your brother has returned!"* (You may want to read this beautiful story in its entirety by looking it up in your Bible.)

### **Questions for Staff:**

What do you think about forgiveness?  
 Have you ever thought you forgave, and then still felt anger?  
 Have you ever apologized, but were not offered forgiveness?  
 Do you ask God for forgiveness? Why or why not?  
 Do you believe God offers forgiveness?  
 Is there anything that you think God could not forgive you for?  
 Is there anyone that you believe would forgive you, no matter what---a person who offers you unconditional love? Who is that person?  
 Is there something that you could never forgive?  
 Who is one of your friends or family who is really good at forgiving?  
 Have you ever felt like the younger son in the pigsty? Who or what helped you get out?  
 Have you ever felt like the older son? Have you ever felt like it was not fair for someone to receive forgiveness? Have you ever felt like the Father, and offered forgiveness? Share.

### **Questions for younger campers:**

Who tells you to forgive?  
 Have you ever forgiven someone?  
 Was it hard?  
 Should you say you're sorry when you don't feel it?  
 When was the last time you apologized? To whom, what, when, where?  
 Do you think it was hard for the younger son to come home?  
 What do you think the father was thinking when the son left? When he was gone for so long? When he saw his son coming home?  
 Have you ever felt like any of the characters in this story? Which one?

### Questions for older campers:

Has a relationship in your life changed or ended because one person could not forgive?  
 Has a relationship thrived because one person was able to forgive?  
 Do you feel your parents forgive you?  
 Do you feel you forgive your parents?  
 Do you hold grudges? Do you know anyone who holds grudges? What does it feel like to hold a grudge?

**Song:** "Amazing Grace" (Words by John Newton, Music unknown, *New Song: Leader's Guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council--PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p.8)

(Teach and sing this now or at some other time during the day. Try using the tune that works best for your unit.)

### Activities:

#### 1. Paper Cranes:

(Borrow the book, *Sadako*, from the office library. Read or tell the story. Together, in the unit, make paper cranes. Coordinate this activity early. See the Arts and Crafts director for supplies and directions.)

#### 2. Carry a Grudge and Letting Go:

(In the morning, on the way back to the unit from breakfast, ask each camper to find a rock. When they return, ask them to sit at the dining fly with their rocks. Give each camper a piece of paper and a pen. Ask each camper to write down on the paper a grudge they still hold against someone, something that they want to ask God to forgive, or an offense they still have not apologized for. Then the campers can put the rock and the piece of paper in their backpack, their pocket, etc. The idea is for them to "carry their burden" all day. At your nightly campfire, have the campers (if they are comfortable) share what is on the piece of paper. After everyone has shared, one of the counselors will read, "Jesus said, 'Come to me all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.'" (Matthew 11:28 NRSV) When each person is ready, he or she can put his or her piece of paper in the fire, and then put the rock on the ground. As each camper adds a rock, together, the rocks should form a cross.) (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 97)

#### 3. Role-Play:

(Sometimes it just takes some practice to ask for forgiveness, or to forgive. Are there any campers who want to practice making an apology, or offering forgiveness? Perhaps camp will be that safe place where a camper can practice. Ask other campers to “stand in” so each camper can “practice.”)

**4. Talk Show:**

(The story of the Prodigal Son involves a lot of drama! Betrayal, money, partying, groveling, forgiving, anger, jealousy, unconditional love, etc. Sounds like an episode from a talk show! Have the campers create a talk show, involving the members of the family, the younger son’s friends (when he was rich), the father’s servants, etc. Also, you will need a talk show host and an audience.)

**5. Skit:**

(Act out the story of the Prodigal Son in a contemporary setting.)

**In Jesus’ Life:** Matthew 5: 23-24 (Good News Bible)

*So if you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, go at once and make peace with your brother, and then come back and offer your gift to God.*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

**Story:** “The Painting of the Last Supper” (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, pp.161-162)

(Tell the story.)

**Forgiving and me...**

(Have the campers write their reflections on the following questions.)

**What I have going for myself (What I do well when it comes to forgiving)...**

**What I can do more of...or what I can do better (How God can help me)...**

**Something new I learned today...**

**Something (an understanding or action) that I can put into practice at home with family and friends...**

**Close with prayer:**

(This may be done by one counselor or camper, or may involve the whole group.)

**Additional material for today’s practice:**

**Scripture:**

Matthew 18:21-35 (Parable of the Unforgiving Servant)

**Quotes:**

“Forgiveness is not an occasional act. It is a permanent attitude.” Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Stories:**

“Wrong Way Riegels” (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, pp. 228-230)

“Brandon’s Mess” (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, pp. 58-60)

“The Hopeless Baseball Game” (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, pp. 116-117)

**Books to Borrow:**

*Sadako* (Eleanor Coerr, Puffin Books, 1993)

*Through My Eyes* (Ruby Bridges, Scholastic Press: New York, New York, 1999)

# Friday Abundant Life --- Choices

## Tips for Teaching Choices

Making choices completes the circle since we began the week talking about abundant life. Thomas Merton, a monk who lived in this century, said, “We give glory to God by being what we were fully meant to be---using all the capacities and gifts given to us by God.” Being truly human means answering the call to love God with all that we are. It also means loving our neighbors by offering our gifts to the world. Living into our full humanness requires careful attention to who we are and to the presence and call of God in our lives. (*Way to Live*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, pp.172-174)

### Opening prayer or time of silence:

(Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

### Introduction:

(We all are called upon to make many decisions every day. Many of these choices are difficult ones. We can choose to make them on our own, or we can use the practice of discernment. Making choices in this age old Christian tradition involves taking our time, praying, reading scripture, seeking guidance from our community, being open to the Holy Spirit’s leading and then going ahead. Sometimes God is inviting us to stretch ourselves and move beyond what we consider to be the right or only way. By keeping our focus on God, we can make choices that give us abundant life.)

### Scripture: Acts 10 (Paraphrase)

*Sometimes choices are hard to make, but if we seek God’s help, the answers may become clearer to us. Peter and Cornelius were two men who had to make tough choices. Peter was a Jew who believed in Jesus. Cornelius was a Gentile---he believed in God but did not accept the Jewish religion. Both men had a strong faith and actively sought the voice of God. Peter did not associate with Gentiles, like Cornelius, because Gentiles did not follow the laws of the Jewish scriptures. Some laws that were very important to Peter were the ones that told what to eat and what not to eat.*

*One day when Cornelius was praying to God, an angel came to him and told Cornelius that God was pleased with him and wanted to answer his prayers. He was to send three men to the town of Joppa where they’d find a Jew named Peter. Cornelius chose to listen to God and sent his men to Peter as he’d been instructed to do. The next day, at the same time that the three men neared Joppa, Peter was praying to God. God sent Peter a vision telling him that the “food laws” were no longer important---all food was good to eat. At first, Peter resisted, but then chose to take the message seriously. As Peter was thinking about what this vision might mean, the three men arrived at his door. The Holy Spirit told Peter to listen to what the men had to say*

*and then follow them back to Caesarea. Peter had a choice to make. He could send away these Gentiles, who he had always believed were unacceptable or he could listen to the voice of God and welcome these men that God had sent. He chose to invite the Gentiles into his home. The next day he followed them to Cornelius' house in Caesarea. Peter told Cornelius that God had shown him that God values everyone---Jews and Gentiles--- the same way. Peter shared the good news of Jesus with Cornelius and his household. They believed what Peter told them and were baptized.*

(You may want to read this story in its entirety in your Bibles.)

### **Questions for Staff:**

- How do you go about making choices?
- What was the last choice you made?
- How did you make that choice?
- Do you ever pray about your choices?
- Do you ever use scripture when making a choice?
- What was the last bad choice you made?
- How could it have been a better choice?
- What was the last choice you felt really good about?
- What made that a good choice?
- Have you ever helped anyone else make a choice?
- How did you help?
- How can we help campers make good choices?

### **Questions for younger campers:**

What choices are you allowed to make? (What to wear, how long to study, who to play with after school, who your best friend is, what teams to play for, etc.)

What choices do others make for you? (What to eat for dinner, how long you have to study, what school you go to, whether or not you go to church, etc.)

- What was the last big choice you made?
- Did you pray about it?
- How do you think God helps us make choices?
- How do you think God helped Cornelius and Peter make choices?
- What other choices could these two men have made?
- How were their lives more abundant because of their choices?
- Was this a hard choice for these men?

### **Questions for older campers:**

- Have you ever been really proud of a choice you made?
- How did you make it?
- Did you pray? Read scripture? Talk to someone else?
- Who do you talk to when you have to make choices?
- Is there a really big choice you are making right now? Do you want to share it with the group?

Each one of our faith practices this week (Prayer, Caring for Creation, Seeking Justice, and Forgiving) involves making a choice. How will you choose differently after this week?

Will you choose to actively pray, or understand your life as prayer? Will you choose to pay attention to God's creation, and do something to care for it? Will you choose to discover what issue you have come "for such a time as this," and work actively for justice? Will you choose to let go of past hurts, grudges, and guilt, and actively apologize and offer forgiveness?

**Song:** "Seek Ye First" (Words and Music by Karen Lafferty, Maranatha! Music, 1972, *New Song: Leader's Guide*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition,, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council--PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 269)

(Teach and sing this now or at some other time during the day.)

### Activities:

#### 1. Who You Gonna Call:

(In the business world, sometimes consultants are brought in to help companies make good decisions. Give campers paper and something to write with. Ask them who, in their lives, they would call in to consult with if they had an important choice to make. What made them choose these people to help them? Share.) (*Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 77)

#### 2. A Friend in Need:

(Divide your unit in pairs. Have each pair decide which person will go first. Ask those campers to share with their partners some choice or decision that they may have to make in the near future. While they are talking, it is the partners' job to listen very carefully. When the first person has finished, the second partner may pray for the first one (either aloud or in silence), asking God to help that person with his or her decision. After some sharing between the two, the pair will then switch roles and repeat the exercise.)

#### 3. Using the Ignatian Examen:

(Allow each camper some time alone to think about the following questions:

- For what moment this week are you most grateful?
- For what moment this week are you least grateful?
- When this week did you feel most alive?
- When did you feel life draining out of you? (*Way to Live*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 183)

Encourage each camper to share with a partner or the group. Then ask each camper to share, in what way, he or she feels God may be calling each of them to abundant life. How can they take this invitation from God home with them? After they leave camp, who will be the community they'll look to for support?)

### **In Jesus' Life:** Luke 4:1-13 (Paraphrase)

*After his baptism, Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, was led into the wilderness. The Devil tempted him three times, but Jesus, strengthened by prayer and scripture, chose not to give in to temptation.*

(Read this scripture from the camper booklet or have them look it up in their Bibles.)

### **Story:** "The Choices of the Three Little Pigs"

(Tell this slightly different version of the original story)

### **Making choices and me...**

(Have the campers write their reflections on the following questions.)

**What I have going for myself (What I do well when it comes to making choices)...**

**What I can do more of...or what I can do better. (How God can help me)...**

**Something new I learned today...**

**Something (an understanding or action) that I can put into practice at home with family and friends...**

### **Close with prayer:**

(This may be done by one counselor or camper, or may involve the whole group.)

### **Additional material for today's practice:**

#### **Scripture:**

Romans 12:2 ("Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind.")

Joshua 1:9 ("Remember that I have commanded you to be determined and confident! Do not be afraid or discouraged, for I, the Lord, your God, am with you wherever you go.")

Joshua 24:15 ("Decide today whom you will serve...As for my family and me, we will serve the Lord.")

#### **Quotes:**

"The glory of God is a human being fully alive." Irenaeus, a second century Christian leader.

"God gives us strength enough, and sense enough, for every thing God wants us to do." John Ruskin

"That is God's call to us---simply to be people who are content to live close to him and to renew the kind of life in which the closeness is felt and experienced." Thomas Merton

"Follow the Spirit, not the crowd."

#### **Stories:**

"The Butterfly" (Author Unknown, 6/19/03,  
<<http://www.jokesnjokes.net/funny.jokes.amusing.humor.laugh/inspirational/stories/stories034.htm>>)

"Ignatius" (*Way to Live*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 180)