

Children's Cabin Time

Children's Leader Instructions

This material is intended to provide a resource for your morning cabin time. You will need to read through this material **before camp**. There are many items that you will need to bring with you, or prepare in advance for this material to be effective. You will also need to make copies of the small group discussion questions for your adult leaders. Feel free to adapt this information to meet the specific needs of your group. Some of this material is designed to be used in large groups and some is designed for small groups of students.

This material is an extension of the Morning Encounter that your students will have already experienced. You will want to read the I Kings 18 Morning Encounter passage with them that first morning, and encourage them to mark this place in their Bibles. They will be reading from it every morning.

You may want to purchase a variety of small candies to use as prizes. Red Hots, Hot Tamales, and "Fire" Jolly Ranchers would be appropriate for our theme.

Portions of these Bible Studies were gathered from various websites including: youthpastor.com; thesource4ym.com; creativeyouthideas.com; egad.com.

Children's Cabin Time Day One

A Burning Question

(Opening option one): You will begin by playing a game which will help your group get better acquainted. Explain that everyone is alike in some ways and everyone is different in some ways. Explain that you are going to call out a category and everyone must group themselves according to their “favorite” in that category. This may result in a group of one, or a group of several students. For instance, if you call out “Movie” then everyone would group themselves according to their favorite movie. After each grouping, take time to question students as to what makes it their favorite, etc. Other “favorite” categories you will want to choose from are: pizza, color, fast-food restaurant, song, TV show, band, teacher at school, etc. Use your imagination. You could also try this game with the category “worst” instead of “favorite.”

(Opening option two): Have your kids stand in a line. Tell them they have to march in whatever direction you tell them. You may want to call them to attention and proceed in military fashion. Begin slowly by calling out “left”, “right”, “right”, “left”. Get faster and faster as the game progresses until your kids can't keep up. You may want to continue the game, and as kids slip up they are eliminated, until there are only one or two players remaining.

Have the kids take a seat and discuss the game. Ask “can you walk in two directions at the same time?” Remind them that when you said “left,” many of them went the other direction. Have them think about the Bible story they read earlier. Elijah compared worshipping idols to trying to go in two directions at the same time. He told the people they would have to decide what direction they would take. Going toward God meant going away from Baal. They couldn't have it both ways.

(Small group discussion): Divide your group into smaller groups and assign an adult leader to each smaller group. Read Joshua 24:14-15. (Give a brief overview of the life of Joshua and this time in the history of the children of Israel.)

Ask what choice does Joshua ask the people to make? Why was it important to force a choice? What would happen if the people made no choice? What types of idols are there in the world today? (An idol is anything that takes your focus away from the Lord.) What types of idols do you struggle with in your own life?

Ask if anyone has ever seen an idol in person? Remind them that an idol is anything we worship instead of God. Distribute lunch size paper sacks to each kid. (The white sacks work better than the brown ones.) Have a variety of art supplies available. Instruct the kids to create an idol that represents something they are tempted to place ahead of their love for God. Take several minutes on this activity and encourage their creativity. When the kids have finished making their idols, call their attention back to Joshua 24:14-15. (You will want to display their completed idols around your cabin. You will destroy them during cabin time tomorrow.)

Tell them that several times in chapter 24, the people answer Joshua with the words “We will serve the Lord,” however, their commitment was short lived. What is your commitment? Does your life show it? What choices do you make when no one else is watching? What was the impact of Joshua's choice and example? How does your example affect your world?

Challenge your small group to take the Joshua 24:15 covenant. Read the covenant together and discuss each item. (**Ahead of time** make enough copies of the Joshua 24:15 handout that accompanies this material. One for each student.)

Joshua 24:15 Covenant

1. Surrender to God daily. Carefully follow God's instructions with courage each day.
2. Make God your #1 priority. Determine what should be part of your life and what shouldn't. Purify your life.
3. Focus your life on things that will last forever. It's a long haul, so keep your eyes on the real destination and the reward God has in store for you.
4. Expect victory! God is with you and will fight for you as you follow Him.

(Gather everyone back into a large group.)

(Closing option one): If you have access to video, play the YouTube video of the skit of the Lifehouse "Everything" song. It is a powerful example of how serving other gods can lead someone away from the one true God. There are several videos on YouTube when you type in Lifehouse Everything Skit. Select your favorite. As the video concludes you will want to discuss what the kids have seen, then close with a word of prayer.

(Closing option two): Lead your kids in a time of commitment as you review the Joshua 24:15 cards. Ask them to prayerfully consider their commitment to the Lord. You may want to leave your open Bible at the front of the group and ask those students who are willing to make this commitment to sign their cards and place them in your open Bible. After a time of challenge and prayer, dismiss your group. Later in the week you will want to meet personally with each student who signed his commitment card. As you give the card back to the student, encourage them to keep it in their Bible as a reminder of the commitment they made to the Lord.

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Signed _____

Date _____

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Children's Cabin Time Day Two

Consuming Fire

(Opening option one): Distribute small paper sacks to each person. (Again, the white ones work best.) Allow the students to decorate them with markers, to look like flames. Don't take too long on the decorating. Open the bags and place them on the floor. Have your kids blow into their bag so that the bag moves across the floor. Have a race to see who can quickly move the bag across the floor. Depending on the time, you can have relay races, boys against girls, fourth graders against fifth graders, etc.

(Opening option two): Ahead of time you will need to purchase some flash paper. This can be found at magic shops or ordered online. (Amazon.com, Dreamlandmagic.com, Thetrickery.com) They usually come in 8 x 9 sheets or 2 x 3 sheets. Take the larger sheets and cut them in half or fourths leaving smaller rectangular pieces.

Give each student a piece of flash paper and a marker (Sharpie's work best). Ask the students to write on the paper a sin or an area in their life that they are struggling with. Ask them to take some time and pray over these sins, asking for God's forgiveness. Then they should bring the pieces of paper to you.

You need to be in an area with no flammable things nearby, standing behind a lit candle. Take the student's papers and pray over them. Then light just the edge of the paper and throw it into the air. The paper will burn in a flash leaving behind no ashes or other residue. (Make sure you practice this technique ahead of time. It takes a little practice to get it right.) Read Psalm 103:11-12, reminding your students that God's forgiveness is complete and He no longer remembers their sin.

(Salvation illustration option one): You will need a bowl of flour, a loaf of bread (unsliced is preferred, but not necessary), a small glass, a gingerbread man cookie cutter, red and green food coloring. You will want to practice this ahead of time.

In the beginning, a long time ago, God created man. He made man from dust in the ground. (Pick up some flour in your hand and blow it into the air.) And poof! Man was created. (Hold up the loaf of bread), Now let's pretend this loaf of bread represents all of mankind. Now, let's talk about you. (Slice off a piece of bread). God created you. A long time ago, sin came into the world and messed up everything. (Use the glass to cut a circle out of the center of the slice of bread.) Now, in every person there is a hole. The only thing that can fill this hole is Jesus. But some people don't know that. They fill the hole with other things. Some people try to use another person to fill the hole. (Use the gingerbread man to cut into another piece of bread and make a person shape. Try to make the person fit into the circle hole in the first slice of bread. It doesn't fit.) Some people try to get a boyfriend or girlfriend to make them feel loved and accepted. But it doesn't work. The hole is still there. (Cut out a rectangle shape of bread to represent money. Use the green food coloring to draw a dollar sign on it.) Some people try to use money to fill the hole. (Try to put the money into the circle hole.) But it doesn't work. The hole is still there. There is only one thing that can fill the hole. (Use the red food coloring to draw a cross on the circle.) Jesus is the only one that can fill the hole in your life. You can try all different things, but they won't fit. People were made to have God in their lives, but when sin came along it wrecked everything. Jesus fixed the problem by dying on the cross, but now it is up to you to put the right piece of the puzzle into your life. All you have to do is ask Jesus to be there.

At this point you may want to discuss salvation more, or have a time of prayer and ask those students who would like to trust Jesus as their Savior to talk to one of your adult leaders.

(Salvation illustration option two): You will need two clear jars, one larger than the other, four colors of food coloring and bleach. You fill the larger jar $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way with water, the smaller jar you fill completely with bleach.

Explain that the jar of water represents our lives. Without sin we are clear and pure. But because

we are sinners, it is impossible to stay clear.

Ask your kids; “How many of you have disobeyed your parents?” Explain that disobedience is a sin and place a drop of food coloring into the water. Now repeat that step 3 more times, each time using a different sin (color) as an example until the water turns an ugly green-brown color. Then explain that Jesus wants to come into our lives and fill the void (the ¼ of the jar that is empty). Pour Jesus (bleach) into the jar of colored water and watch the transformation begin as Jesus takes away the sin in our life.

Remind your kids they will sin again (add a couple more drops of food coloring). The food coloring will continue to disappear. As long as we repent of our sins, Jesus is ready to forgive and make us clean and pure again.

At this point you may want to discuss salvation more, or have a time of prayer and ask those students who would like to trust Jesus as their Savior to talk to one of your adult leaders.

(Closing option one): Ask your kids to get the paper sack idols that they made on the first morning of camp. Remind them that God is a jealous God and doesn't want them to worship anything else in their lives. Ask them if they are serious about making God the number one priority in their lives.

Have a large metal bucket or large metal bowl in an area with no flammable things nearby. If the weather is nice, you may want to do this activity outside. (Have a container of water handy in case there is a stray spark.) Instruct those students who are willing to give God first place in their lives to bring their idols up, one at a time, and light them on fire. You may want them to hand the sack to you, so you can light it on fire, then place it into the container to burn.

Have the kids form a circle around the bucket, allowing them to watch the fire burn. This can be a powerful illustration. Close this time with a time of prayer, thanking God for helping us make Him our top priority.

(Closing option two): Read the following story to your students:

Many years ago, pioneers were making their way across one of the central states to a distant place that had been opened up for homesteading. They traveled in covered wagons drawn by oxen, and progress was very slow. One day they were horrified to see a long line of smoke in the west, stretching for miles across the prairie. Soon it was evident that the dried grass was burning fiercely and coming toward them rapidly. They had crossed a river the day before but it would be impossible to get back to it before the flames would be upon them.

One man seemed to have an understanding as to what should be done. He gave the command to set fire to the grass behind them. Then when a space was burned over, the whole group moved back onto that burned out space. As the flames roared toward them from the west, a little girl cried out in terror. “Are you sure we won't be burned up?” The leader replied, “Don't be afraid my child, the flames can't reach us here, for we are standing where the fire has been!”

What can we learn from this old story? Respect the power of the fire. It can destroy you. We need to listen and take the advise of Jesus, who laid Himself down in the path of the fire for us. The fire of God's judgment burned against Jesus on Calvary. All who are in Christ are safe forever, for they are now standing firmly where the fire has been.