



CentriKid 2023

Beyond the Surface: God Sees the Heart
Before and After Camp Devotions

BEFORE Camp Devotion #1: Let's Get Ready!

Main Idea

Preparing for CentriKid will help us be ready for what God wants to teach us.

Scripture Focus

Matthew 7:7

Supplies

Bible

Variety of "building" materials (craft sticks, tape, paper, recyclable items, marshmallows, etc.)

Duffle bags or suitcases (one per team of kids)

Items to pack for each suitcase (close-toed shoes, Bible, water bottle, T-shirt, shorts, toothbrush, soap, swimsuit, towel, pajamas, paper heart cut-out)

Random items to put in the packing pile that are not on the packing list

Packing list for each team

Set Up

Place all the packing items in a large pile on one side of the room.

Dive In

Speedy Suitcase

Guide the children to form groups of 3-5 people. If you are grouping kids in a specific way for camp week, it might be good to use the same groups so the children get to know one another ahead of time. Explain that they will have 2 minutes to build a suitcase with the supplies given to hold their items for camp. Distribute a variety of "building" materials to each group. When you give the signal, allow the groups to begin building their suitcase. Circulate among the groups, telling





them to hurry because there is not much time. You want to enhance the feeling of “pressure” for this experience! At the 2 minute mark, direct the children to stop building. Observe the status of each group’s suitcase. Ask the following questions to help the children make connections with their experience:

- How do you feel about your suitcase?
- What would have helped you to build a better one?
- When have you felt rushed or unprepared in real life?

Say: “As our time for CentriKid gets closer, it’s important to prepare so we are ready to experience what God has for us! Feeling pressured or not having what we need can cause us to miss out on important things. Today, we are going to focus on how to get ready—with our stuff and with our hearts!

Dig Deeper

Pack It Up

Using the same groups as the previous game, lead the children to line up with their group on one side of the room. Distribute a packing list to each group. Place a bag or suitcase at the front of each team’s line. Explain that the goal is to get one of each item on their list (and only those items) packed into their bag. One at a time, each team member must run to the heap of items, find one item from the list, pack it in their team bag, check it off the list and then tag the next person in line. The challenge is that all the items for all the teams are mixed into one big pile! Once the team’s items are all checked off the list, the whole team needs to be seated. Give the signal to begin and allow the children to start the relay. When a team is fully seated, check to see that their suitcase has the correct items. Use this opportunity to highlight the importance of bringing each of these items to camp and how they will help them. You may want to ask the campers why they need these things at CentriKid.

Say: “These are all things that will help you have what you need during your time at CentriKid. One of the most important things, however, I could not really put in the pile so I made a symbol of it.” Hold up the paper heart cut-out. “Your heart! This summer at CentriKid, our theme is “Beyond the Surface: God Sees the Heart.” God sees and cares about your heart. He wants your heart to be ready to receive His love. As we prepare for camp, remember to get your heart open and ready for what God wants to teach you. If we are ready, God will give and





teach us so much! Listen to how Jesus explained this in Matthew 7:7." Read or ask a volunteer to read Matthew 7:7.

"Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you."

Say: "When we are actively asking God questions, looking for Him and ready to learn, He will guide our hearts in just the right way!"

Zoom Out

Pray Together

Close your time with prayer, asking God to make your hearts ready for what He has in store.





BEFORE Camp Devotion #2: Prayers Beyond the Surface

Main Idea

Praying for each other will allow us to go beyond the surface with our camp experience.

Scripture Focus

Matthew 18:19

Supplies

Bible

Kiddie pools or large box or tote

Sand (rice, shredded paper, or packing peanuts work great too!)

Small items to hide in the sand (marbles, plastic bugs, coins, etc.)

Large piece of butcher paper (about 4 feet long) with a few drawings of worries you have about camp

Markers or crayons

Cut-outs of hearts, one with each child's name on it

Set Up

Fill each pool with sand (or other substance you can hide items in) and hide the small items under the surface. Place the Prayer Station instructions and supplies in three separate areas around the room.

Dive In

Beyond the Surface

Guide the children to form groups of 3-5 people. Lead the campers to line up with their group on one side of the room. Explain that their goal is to locate as many items as possible beyond the surface in the pool on the other side of the room. The first person on each team will run to their pool and go beyond the surface with their toes to pull out an item. They will take their item back to their team and tag the next person in line who will then run down to the pool. They will continue in this way until time is called. Make sure each person has had at least one turn at the pool before calling time. When you call time, ask the children the following questions:

- What did you have to do to find the items?





- What was difficult about this?
- How might we go beyond the surface at CentriKid?

Say, "Our theme this summer at CentriKid is "Beyond the Surface: God Sees the Heart." Often we are more concerned about things on the surface—like what we are going to wear to camp or if we will like the food, but what's beyond the surface is really important—our hearts!"

Dig Deeper

Prayer Stations

Say: "One way we can go beyond the surface to focus on our hearts is to pray for each other. Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 18:19." Read or ask a volunteer to read Matthew 18:19.

"Again, truly I tell you, if two of you on earth agree about any matter that you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven."

Say: "We are going to take time tonight to pray together for our time at CentriKid. You will have the opportunity to talk and listen to God as you visit several prayer stations." Explain each station to the children and then allow them to begin. It may be helpful to have an adult or youth leader at each station to help guide the children. Play quiet worship music as the children rotate through the stations.

Prayer Station 1:

(supplies: butcher paper with a few drawings of your worries, markers or crayons)

Draw a picture of something you are worried about in regards to going to CentriKid. Next, circle someone else's worry picture. Ask God to help that person trust Him with their concern.

Prayer Station 2:

(supplies: paper heart cut-outs with names of the children in your group)

Find the heart with your name on it. Take the heart to one of your adult leaders and allow them to pray over you by name.





Prayer Station 3:

(supplies: Bible)

Read or listen to someone read the following verses. Listen to what they say about God's heart. After you've listened, ask God to help your heart be ready to hear Him.

Psalm 103:11-12

**For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his faithful love
toward those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed
our transgressions from us.**

1 John 4:8b-9

God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his one and only Son into the world so that we might live through him.

Zoom Out

Signal the close of the prayer time by turning off the music and gathering the children in a central area. Ask a few questions to help the kids reflect on their prayer experience:

- **What helped your heart during this prayer time?**
- **What did God use to speak to you during prayer?**
- **What is one thing you can keep praying for as we head to CentriKid?**

Conclude with a group prayer for the hearts of everyone going to CentriKid.





AFTER Camp Devotion #1: Let Your Light Shine

Main Idea

Our obedience helps others know God.

Scripture Focus

Matthew 5:16

Supplies

Bible
Flashlight
Dark paper
Mirror
Paper
Pencils
Supplies for service opportunity

Set Up

Ahead of time, choose a tangible service opportunity your children can participate in. For example, it might be packing shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, making "pick-me-up" gifts for school teachers, or creating door hangers for nursing home patients. Place the instructions and supplies for each obedience opportunity in three separate areas around the room.

Dive In

Reflect the Light

Ask a volunteer to hold a flashlight for you. Recruit a second volunteer to be the target and hold up a dark piece of paper. Explain that you are going to help the flashlight volunteer shine the light on the piece of paper without directly pointing the flashlight at the paper. Hold up a mirror and guide the flashlight volunteer to direct the beam of light toward the mirror. Position the target volunteer to hold the paper so the flashlight beam is reflected from the mirror onto the paper. If you have enough flashlights and mirrors, allow the children to try this in groups of three. Ask the campers the following light questions to reflect on their observations:

- **Where is the light coming from?**





- Is the mirror creating the light on its own?
- How is the mirror passing the light to the paper?
- How is the light of God in our hearts like this example?

Say, "When our heart is devoted to God, we can reflect God's love to others by the way we live. The light comes from God living in us. Our actions help point others to Him. Let's see how Jesus explained it in Matthew 5:16." Read or ask a volunteer to read Matthew 5:16.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

Dig Deeper

Obedience Opportunities

Say, "Today we are going to explore different ways to obey God that will point others to Him." Explain each opportunity and indicate where the supplies are for each one. Allow the children to choose one or more of the opportunities (as time allows).

Opportunity 1: Share a prayer

Think of someone you know who needs prayer right now. It might be someone who is sick or sad or needs strength to do what God asks. Write a prayer to God, asking Him to help this person. Give the prayer you wrote to the person to remind them that God will help them.

Opportunity 2: Tell about God

Think of a friend you would like to tell about God. Write a note to that person to explain something God is teaching you right now or something He taught you at CentriKid. Include a Bible verse to share with the person. Give the note to your friend.

Opportunity 3: Meet a Need

Provide instructions for the specific service project you chose.

Zoom Out

Offer to God - Gather the children in a central area. Offer your acts of obedience to God in prayer, asking God to use them to help others know Him.





AFTER Camp Devotion #2: Let Us Pray

Main Idea

Jesus gave us a model for prayer to keep our hearts focused on God.

Scripture Focus

Matthew 6:9-13

Supplies

Bible

Copies of Question List:

1. Where can I find the model prayer in the Bible?
2. How can I get to know God better?
3. How many times does my heartbeat in a day?
4. When did Jesus pray?
5. What is our lesson about today?
6. Who is standing next to me?
7. What are three things I could say in prayer?
8. What language am I speaking right now?

Copies of Statement List:

1. Your heart beats about 100,000 times a day.
2. Jesus prayed all the time, but we read in the Bible that He often got up early in the morning to pray alone.
3. Our lesson today is about focusing on God in prayer.
4. There is a person standing next to me.
5. I can tell God what I love about Him, ask for what I need and tell Him I'm sorry.
6. I am speaking English right now.
7. One place you can find the model prayer is in Matthew.
8. I can get to know God better by praying, reading His word and obeying Him.

Five large cards with the letters A, L, C, F, S

Large poster paper

Washable Markers

Map

Sticker dots

Crackers

Disposable hand wipes





Set Up

Make copies of the Question and Statement lists so you have 1 set for each pair of campers. Display a map that children can put stickers on.

Dive In

Talking and Listening

Lead the children to find a partner. Give one person in each pair the Questions List and the other person the Statements List. Explain that their goal is to listen as well as they can to their partner while at the same time read their list as quickly as they can out loud. They will have 30 seconds to complete their task. When time is up, instruct campers to share as many things as they heard from their partner's list. Ask the following questions to help them make connections:

- What was it like trying to talk and listen at the same time?
- What would have made this easier?
- How is this like or unlike the way we talk or listen to God?

Say, "God can hear all of us talking to Him at the same time, but oftentimes we don't listen to God because we are so busy talking! Sometimes we don't know how to talk to God or how to hear him when He speaks to us. Jesus' friends had questions about prayer too. Today we will see how Jesus taught us to pray so our hearts stay connected to Him. Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 6:9-13." Read or ask a volunteer to read Matthew 6:9-13.

"Therefore, you should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."





Dig Deeper

Model Prayer

Explain that the children will get to practice each section of the model prayer to connect with God. Lead the group through each section of the prayer using the related activity.

Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy.

Choose a volunteer to select a letter card. Guide the children to think of words to describe God that start with that letter. When they think of a word, lead them to write the word on the poster paper. Repeat this process with two more letters. Say, **"We honor God as holy when we recognize and speak of how great He is."**

Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Guide the children to place a sticker dot on a place on the map that they want to pray for. Ask God to help people in that place know His name and understand how to follow Him. Pray for the missionaries who tell others about God in that place. You may want to highlight any places where missionaries from your church are currently serving.

Give us today our daily bread.

Distribute a cracker to each child. Lead them to eat the cracker and think about how God provides what they need. As they chew and swallow, encourage campers to tell God what they need right now.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Distribute a washable marker and disposable wipe to each child. Lead them to think of something they have said, done or thought that did not please God. Guide them to draw a sad face on the back of one hand. Say, **"1 John 1:9 says—If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."** Guide the campers to use the wipe to clean off the sad face as a reminder that God forgives us.

Zoom Out

Group Prayer

Say, **"Jesus' model prayer helps us focus our hearts on Him. Some simple phrases we use everyday can remind us to pray like this. We can say to God—I love you.**





(Point to the poster of words describing God) Thank you. (Point to the map.) Please. (hold up a cracker) And I'm Sorry. (hold up a marker and a wipe.)

Guide the campers to say the starting phrases with you as you pray:

"God, I love that you are caring.

Thank you for the work you are doing all over the world.

Please give us what we need.

I'm sorry for what I've done that does not please you. Amen."

