

VESPER IDEAS FOR MISSION TRIP

OPENING:

Pass the candle around the circle and ask each person to say the thing they are most excited about for the week and the thing they are most afraid of happening (i.e. being left out). Can also ask each person to reveal something that the team can do for them to help them have a great week (i.e. be patient when I'm tired, give me space in the afternoon, compliment me often)

GUARDIAN ANGELS:

All names of team members are placed into a hat and each member draws a name (not their own). The name should be kept secret. From that point forward they are responsible for being the Guardian Angel for that person. They are to be attentive to this person, discovering and being aware of all their positive qualities. They are to take special time to get to know the person (without being too obvious) and do what they can to help this person have a good day, a good trip, and a great experience throughout the week. In addition, the Guardian Angel is to be aware of the person's revealed fear of the trip and make an effort to make sure the fear is not realized during the week. They are to also make a special effort to make sure the team is providing the help the person asked for.

SERENITY PRAYER VESPER:

Prayer: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference.

Serenity Prayer Vesper is simply looking at the prayer – taking a line and addressing it as it pertains to your life. Example: I need serenity for this situation or I am seeing courage for change in this area of my life.

AFFIRMATION PAPER:

Pass out a piece of paper and a pen to each person. Have everybody write their name at the top. Pass the paper to your right. Each person should write a sentence or two of affirming, positive words about the person whose name is at the top of the page. Each sentence should be thoughtful-people might keep these forever. After everyone is done, each person reads their paper. Go around the circle and ask each person to say the sentence that surprised them the most and why and the thing that meant the most to them and why. Can be done on two nights toward the end of the week.

ZÖE AND SUCKE (pronounced suck-a):

Pass the candle and ask each person to say the thing in life that brings them sucke (when you feel disconnected, alone, the opposite of Zoe). Then the thing in life that brings them Zöe (when you are truly alive, God is in his heaven and all is right with the world). Get as deep and thoughtful as possible (when I am with my friends because then I feel loved and not alone is better than when I am driving in my car because it is

cool).

GUARDIAN ANGELS/LAYING OF THE HANDS – Great for last Vesper!!!:

Someone volunteers to go first and talks about their “person”, who they were a guardian angel for. They talk about all the positive things they saw during the week about that person and what makes him/her so special. Then that person goes, etc. Laying of the hands can take place after the Guardian Angel speaks. Their “person” stands in the middle of the circle and each person places a hand on them. The Guardian Angel starts with a prayer for that person, followed by Lord, Hear Our Prayer.

Then the rest of the people in the circle can say a prayer for that person. Prayers should include asking God to put this person in a place where they can experience Zöe often and protect them from times of sucke.

JOYS AND CONCERNS:

An opportunity to share joys and concerns with the team. Can be in prayer form: each person shares then everybody prays for the person to their right in a Lord, Hear Our Prayer form.

HIGHS AND LOWS:

Same as above but may be focused on the day or the week so far. Can include ideas of team work and how to better support each other and work as a team. Can also include funniest moment on the trip, etc.

OPEN VESPER:

What’s on your mind?

FAITH:

What does it mean? Bible scriptures. Love is.... Doubt. Questions. How to live it out. Amazing experiences that make you believe. The power of prayer.

SPIN THE BOTTLE:

Place a bottle in the center of the circle. Have one person start and spin the bottle. The spinner should talk about the person the bottle lands on in a positive, affirming way (like Guardian angel but random)

IDEAL SELF – ACTUAL SELF

Have the kids take a few minutes with a pen and a notebook or piece of paper and talk about how they envision their best self. Have them write down how they want to be/how they want to be perceived/what attributes are their ideal versions of themselves. Have them go around and share what they’ve written and allow conversation to happen around what is shared.

Then have the kids spend a few minutes writing down the reasons that they cannot or do not live up to their version of their actual selves. What are the obstacles in themselves or their lives that keep them from reaching their goal for themselves. Have the team share these reasons with one another and allow conversation to surround this.

Read Romans Chapter 7:14-25 – and prompt discussion around human actions and why they are imperfect, how God might enter into this situation and come to our aid.

Teresa of Avila Vesper

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 looks out on the world, yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good and yours are the hands with which He is to bless us now.

Teresa of Avila

In what ways do you feel you act as Christ's body on earth?
What about feeling specifically like Christ's hands, feet and eyes?
Name some experiences where you felt you have participated in doing God's work.

Do you ever doubt that God can use you to do God's work? Why?
What is the overall message of this quote and how does it pertain to life on a mission trip?

GOOD SAMARITAN VESPER

OPENING

Tell the story of the Good Samaritan

Scripture:

Luke 10:25-37 (NRSV) *The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Mt 22.34—40; Mk 12.28—34)* 25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" 27 He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." 28 And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." 29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' 36 Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" 37 He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Who is your neighbor? Who is your friend? Is friendship one dimensional? Why do we serve our "friends" instead of people?

Tell the story of serving “friends” by recalling the passage from the Bible and pouring yourself out, serving others and then God and grace lifting you up.

Open the vesper with vesper intro-trust, honesty, confidentiality, etc.

Hit these points in your vesper:

]

Who are our friends and neighbors? Why do we think some people are our friends and others are not worthy? Who does Jesus say is our neighbor?

What should we do to serve them? How should we treat them or not threat them?

Why should we do or not do these things?

Discuss social atmosphere in the schools... what do you like and what do you not like? Why?

What do we mean by

Love everyone...even when it's hard When
somebody is talking...listen and don't talk No
name calling...EVER Be trustworthy... No
cliques...WE ARE ONE No swearing Be yourself
and don't judge anyone Stand-up for each
other Have fun!

What can we do to embrace our neighbors? What can we do to spread the love and acceptance we all want and need?

Freedom Vesper

Question 1

What is freedom? What does it mean for someone to be truly free? What is the difference between physical freedom and spiritual/ emotional freedom?

Possible Answers to Question #1:

**To have rights To act, think, believe
the way you want to To be entirely
satisfied To know you are fulfilling
your life's purpose To accept and love
oneself To be yourself To exercise free
will To make your own decisions To
not be ruled by anything To not be
trapped To be free of inner conflicts**

Question #2A

Who and what limit your freedom?

Possible Answers to Question #2A:

Parents School

and teachers
Coaches
Contracts Rules
Government
Laws Peers
Media Opposite
sex Social Life
Police Older
siblings Fear
Authority figures
Peers/ Freedom

Question #2B

Why do these people or things limit your freedom? What are they afraid of?

Possible Answers to Question #2B:

Fear we will make the wrong decision(s)
Fears about our future
Fear for our safety
Fear of change
Fear of the unknown
Fear of loss of respect
Fear of chaos
Fear that we will repeat their mistakes
Fear of facing their own consequences if they don't limit our freedom
Fear for their reputation
Fear for their self-image
Fear of loneliness

• Even when we are freed from other people and things, we often give up our freedom. Sometimes we give up our freedom to other people - sometimes we give up our freedom to habits, emotions, and views of others or the world.

Paul wrote:

"For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm therefore and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." [Galatians 5:1]

And

"For you were called to freedom brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence." [Galatians 5:13]

Question # 3A for Discussion Groups:

What is temptation? What are some of the temptations you deal with that might limit your freedom?

Discussion Group Answers to Question #3A

Peer Pressure
Career Pressure
Judgmentalism
Consequences of irresponsibility
Bound by our history, the

**"skeletons in our closets" Addictions
(alcohol, drugs, TV, sex) Materialism White
lies Perfectionism Eating Disorders
Depression Letting other people take your
freedom**

**HABITS: MOUNTAIN-SIDE-ALCOHOL-DRUGS EMOTIONS:
SADNESS-LONELINESS-SELF IMAGE-ANGER-FEAR VIEWS:
JUDGEMENTS-DECISIONS-SEX**

Question #3B for Discussion Groups

Why do we give into temptations that limit our freedom? Is it fear and insecurity? What are you afraid of and insecure about?

Possible Answers to Question #3B.

**Fear of being alone Fear of not being accepted
Fear of being hurt Fear of failure Fear of
consequences Fear of losing a relationship Fear
of stepping outside our comfort zone Fear of
being disappointed Fear of losing control Fear of
yourself Fear of your own abilities Fear of being
completely free to make your own decisions
Fear of what others may think of you Fear of
insecurity Fear of God**

Angels of God almost always begin by telling us "Fear Not!" The disciple John wrote:

"If we love one another, God lives in us . . . God is love. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." 1 John 4:8,12,18. Question #4 for Discussion Groups:

As a youth group, what are some of the ways we can love one another that can lead to reducing our insecurities and fears and helping us to be more truly free.

Discussion Group Answers to Question #4:

**Love one another Trust one another Respect yourself
Respect others as they are Respect the freedom of others Be
an outlet for each other to reality, real friendship, true
closeness Give up some freedom in obedience to God to
become more truly free *Realize that there will always be
someone out there smarter, faster, richer, etc., but true
freedom comes from finding inner acceptance and peace*
Step out of your "comfort Zone" Move beyond preconceived
notions/stereotypes about others Don't just say it, do it Let
down your guard enough to accept help from others**

**Patience with one another Be Honest Be Real Support others
Listen to each other Accept each other Express your love:
give a hug**