

# Connecting Camp to Home



We know that the most powerful influence on any person's faith life is those closest to them. For most children and youth, that is their family. All the camps, youth groups, and VBS programs in all the world can't equal the power of faith shaped by family and mentors.

The goal of these activities is to provide some practices for families at home. The themes follow the daily themes from camp. This provides another opportunity for campers to share their experiences with family and their family to join the conversation.

## Each day has the same outline:

**Scripture to Read** – This can be done individually or as a family. You can use the other activities and questions to dive deeper, or just discuss the reading.

**Questions for Reflection** – Whether it is a meal time, in the car, or an intentional conversation together, these questions invite storytelling and idea sharing.

**Activity to Share** – Every activity is different. Some are more complicated. Some require a little planning. All of them will create quality family connections.

**Challenges for Living it Out** – These can be used for reflection in the moment, as an invitation to share stories from the past, or as goals to vision around in the future.

You don't have to do these in any order, or even have to do them all. The hope is that these questions, activities, and challenges will provide a buffet or options for your family.

These could also be activities you share with other families in your church community. There is no wrong way to use these daily sheets. They are for your use, and our prayer is that they will help campers and families grow closer to each other and to God.

# Take Home Sheets



## Day 1: Wilderness Is

**Scripture to Read:** Psalm 139: 7-14

**Questions for Reflection:**

- What makes you feel safe in unknown places?
- What does “wilderness” mean to you?
- Can you name a time in your life that shaped or changed you?
- Where have you seen God in times of being shaped or changed?

**Activity to Share:**

These are options for you to do as a family, with friends, or with a group at Church.

1. Take a nature walk where you live. Make lists of the different types of leaves, flowers, animals, rocks, or even types of weeds. At the end of your walk, look over the lists together. Talk about the diversity of what you found and the beauty in each thing. Take a look around your space at all the people present and the beauty of each person. Discuss how we see God in nature and people’s beauty.
2. Have everyone draw a map of your neighborhood, home, or church. Let people compare their work and see what things they included or left out. Ask everyone which places feel safest, strangest, or most frightening. Talk about how God might be found in each place on the maps. For a little extra fun, try following each other’s maps and see how the real world compares to our memory and perceptions.

**Challenges for Living It Out:**

- Pause when outdoors to look for God in your environment, even if it is urban.
- Journal for a few days, listing memories from moments where you felt changed.
- Create a space where you can take time with God when you need it.

# Take Home Sheets



## Day 2: Wilderness Awe

**Scripture to Read:** Job 12: 7-10

**Questions for Reflection:**

- What have you learned by watching animals?
- What wisdom do you think a tree might have?
- When was the last time you actually experienced awe or wonder?
- What is the difference between awe and surprise?

**Activities to Share:**

These are options for you to do as a family, with friends, or with a group at Church.

1. Give everyone a piece of paper and provide something to draw with. Invite everyone to create a character who is either a non-human animal that exists in our world, or a plant. This is not a mythical creature or alien, but something from our world that (for this exercise) somehow has an ability to communicate. After everyone created their character, spend some time introducing them to each other. Invite each person to imagine what their character might teach us if they were given the opportunity. What might these characters tell us about God?
2. Invite each person to share the most beautiful or amazing place they have ever visited, or wish they could visit. For each person's location, imagine what your group might do together in that space. Is it somewhere you would want to be active, or sit and enjoy the scenery? Is it a place where you can be comfortable outside, or does it require special gear? Does the amount of work required to visit add to the experience or detract from it? How does being in such spaces make you feel? How does being in such places make you feel about God?

**Challenges for Living It Out:**

- Keep a running list of things that amaze you or evoke awe and wonder.
- Grow something or keep a plant alive and healthy
- Journal about what distracts you or numbs you to Creation's wonder.
- Find a sacred space that you can visit regularly, even if it's just a closet or park bench. If you pause to make room for God in that space, the sacred will become real to you.

# Take Home Sheets



## Day 3: Wilderness Leads

**Scripture to Read:** Exodus 13:17-22

**Questions for Reflection:**

- What are some parts of nature that people use to find or give direction?
- How good are you at asking for help or directions?
- When have you experienced Creation telling humans, “Change direction?”
- Where do you look for guidance when you are confused?
- How might God be guiding us today?

**Activities to Share:**

These are options for you to do as a family, with friends, or with a group at Church.

1. For each of the following prompts, ask your group, “Where would you go for guidance or to get directions?” This could be a person, publication, website, etc.
  - Lost in the woods
  - Deciding what to have for dinner
  - Putting together a toy or furniture
  - Completing a level in a game
  - Repairing a relationship
  - Fitting in at school or work

Afterward, think about what role God might play in each situation. Think about it from your personal perspective and then reflect on how someone from a different culture or faith tradition might see God in each prompt.

2. Invite each person to make a list of big decisions they have made, and for each, think about how God might have been guiding them. If you are working in an intergenerational group, consider having the younger “interview” others about how they made big choices or handled situations that they may face in the future.

**Challenges for Living It Out:**

- Make time each day to remember that God is with you.
- Practice asking for help or guidance.
- Journal about how you have made past decisions and what you learned.
- Imagine God is sitting with you when problem-solving.

# Take Home Sheets



## Day 4: Wilderness Frightens

**Scripture to Read:** Matthew 14:22-30

**Questions for Reflection:**

- How does being alone impact your fears or anxiety?
- What gives you courage or feeds your confidence?
- How comfortable are you with big or bold choices?
- What big or bold step might God be asking you to take?

**Activities to Share:**

These are options for you to do as a family, with friends, or with a group at Church.

1. Ask everyone to make two lists. One of the places where you can be yourself and feel safe. The other of the places where you feel less secure, worry, or know you can't be yourself. Invite everyone to share their lists and discuss how such places impact how we make decisions and feel about ourselves. Which type of space is easier to talk about our faith? Invite everyone to imagine being in an unsafe space, and Jesus meeting them there with an outstretched hand, saying, "I'm with you." If we could keep this image in mind, how might it impact our feelings and behaviors?
2. Give each person a piece of paper, a pencil, and coloring supplies. Invite them to write something in pencil that is a real fear for them, assuring them that no one will see it. Now, invite them to create a character to represent their fear. It could be a dragon, a spider, or a balloon with a face. It doesn't matter. Whatever they want to use is fine. Invite them to color it thoroughly so that the pencil writing is covered. Those willing can share their creature with the group, then provide some personal time for each person to converse with their "fear." What would they like to say to it? How might they work around it? What big steps might God help them take to move beyond it?

**Challenges for Living It Out:**

- Practice taking alone time or unplugging to refuel and renew yourself.
- Start conversations with your fears. Invite God in when you can.

# Take Home Sheets



## Day 5: Wilderness Unites

**Scripture to Read:** Esther 4:12-17

**Scripture to Watch:** [Bim Bam's animated story of Esther](#)

### Questions for Reflection:

- Who do you think of as “your people?”
- What traditions, holidays, or practices make you feel connected to others?
- What change might you address in the world if you had enough help?
- When has the support of others empowered you?

### Activities to Share:

These are options for you to do as a family, with friends, or with a group at Church.

1. Give each person a piece of paper and things to draw with and invite them to share their vision for a “perfect world.” After everyone has had time to be creative, invite them to share their work amongst each other and lift up one or two things that are very different from the world we live in today. Spend some time talking about those differences and what it would take for them to become a reality. Who would have to be involved? How big of a change would it be? What wisdom might you find from those who have tried to create change in the past?
2. Come up with a special handshake or signal unique to your group. Come up with a special word that can be a way of greeting one another or encouraging each other. Imagine the times you might use it and then practice. Over the next couple of months, try to use these and then revisit the conversation. How did it feel to use the special sign or word? How might it feel to use this word or signal in relationship to God as well as your group or family?

### Challenges for Living It Out:

- Keep a prayer practice that you share in common with others.
- Look for ways to make others feel connected rather than separated.
- Set special spiritual practices for a week or a month.
- Pray for the most vulnerable in your community as if they are “your people.”

# Take Home Sheets



## Day 6: Wilderness Reveals

**Scripture to Read:** Luke 10: 25-37

**Questions for Reflection:**

- What makes a person “good”?
- How much injustice can we ignore before we become part of the problem?
- What keeps us from making systemic changes in our world?
- How might Jesus respond to these questions?

**Activities to Share:**

These are options for you to do as a family, with friends, or with a group at Church.

1. Volunteer at a local food pantry, shelter, or feeding ministry. Do your best to call people by name and make eye contact with each person. Afterward, spend some time sharing your experiences and talking about why such services are needed in our world and how we might all do better.
2. Make a list of issues people in your community face daily. Now that you are aware of the issues (have seen the person in need), think about what the community could do to make things better. Write letters to a local leader or representative to share your concerns and suggestions for a better world. Invite others to join you by writing their own letters and suggestions.

**Challenges for Living It Out:**

- Look people in the eye and acknowledge them.
- Keep asking yourself what the “kingdom of God” Jesus taught about looks like.
- Keep asking questions about the needs in your community.
- Pray about people and systems and don’t give up.

# Take Home Sheets



## Day 7: Wilderness Awaits

**Scripture to Read:** Jeremiah 29:11-14

**Questions for Reflection:**

- What plans do you think God has for us in the future?
- How do God's hopeful words fit into the mood of our world?
- How can you help God's plans become reality?

**Activities to Share:**

These are options for you to do as a family, with friends, or with a group at Church.

1. Create a new prayer practice that you can use together in the future. This could be a way of starting a prayer, welcoming each other, or sharing thoughts and feelings with God. Practice doing it together a few times, until it becomes comfortable.
2. Take a walk and try to spot places where there used to be a road, path, trail, stream, or opening. This might be a closed-up door, a bricked-over entry, a rise in the geography that looks like water used to come through, or a place where new roads have been built. Imagine who used to travel that path, live there, or think there would never be another way besides that one. Have a prayer together thanking God for the new things that have happened and those still to come.

**Challenges for Living It Out:**

- Be attentive to new growth around you and thank God for it.
- Try a new name for God each time you pray for the next week.
- Look for new things God might be up to and celebrate them, even if it's hard.