

# **God's Excellent Adventure**

Adapted from Camp Lutherlyn

Sunday Night:

## **ADVENTURE**

This week is all about adventure! To begin, ask your kids to write down an experience they had that was a journey into the unknown, something unusual, exciting perhaps romantic or dangerous, and involved risk. Parents do the same.

### ***GROUP REFLECTION:***

Parents and children share their stories of adventure with each other.

### ***INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:***

Reviewing my life I'd have to say that it is:

- Exciting and Challenging
- A pretty good mix of quiet and exciting times
- Mostly boring interrupted, rarely, by excitement
- Totally boring - always

Share your ratings with each other.

### **DEVOTIONS:**

**Mark 8:34-35** *he who saves his life will lose it*

How would you describe a life lived on this principle?

**1 John 4:7-8** *God is love*

"Life lived on the edge - ready to risk everything for God - and God is love."

## DAY 1, MONDAY

## ADVENTURE

**OBJECTIVES:** To help children begin to shape their ideas about adventure and build a working definition and to begin to see the Bible as a chronicle of the God/human adventure in life and faith.

### FOCUS:

**ACTION:** Go on a compass adventure. If you don't have a compass, find out which directions are north, south, east, and west in your neighborhood. Walk out your front door and walk ¼ mile north. Then walk ¼ mile east, ¼ mile south, and ¼ mile west. Feel free to adapt the distance and directions, the main idea is to go on walk using a compass or knowledge of the cardinal directions to guide you.

Upon returning home ask:

What did you experience?

How did you feel about it?

What would you call the experience? (Dig for "an adventure")

**QUERY:** How do we define adventure?

*An endeavor or journey into the unknown undertaken in pursuit of some goal that is unusual, exciting, often romantic, dangerous, and involves risk.*

What do adventures do for us?

*Challenge us, sweeten life, scare us, bring out the best and the worst in us, etc.*

How do people get involved in adventures?

*By finding a map, a threat or challenge is made, invitation, greed, in response to a need, curiosity or a desire to learn, innocent bystanders fall into the action, etc.*

How do people respond to being involved in adventure?

*Go for it! (Proactive - push it to the limit - Indiana Jones), Survival Mode (reactive), Avoidance, Reluctant Warrior, Become Invisible, Check Out, Give Up, Run Away etc.*

**EXPRESSION:** Find, make, describe, or otherwise produce a "souvenir" of an adventure you have had. Scar, relic, photo or drawing, memory, etc.

**EXPLANATION:** Do a show and tell of your "Explorers' Souvenir."  
Talk about some adventures you have had.

### BIBLE:

**TELL:** The Bible is a book rich in adventure stories. Read (or simply explain) the adventures of the following biblical characters:

<b>READ:</b>	Genesis 6:9-7, 17	Noah
	Genesis 12:1-9	Abraham
	Exodus 3:1-14	Moses
	I Samuel 17:32-51	David & Goliath
	Jonah 1:1-17	Jonah and the big fish
	Matt 2:13-15	Baby Jesus flight into Egypt
	Matt 4:1-11	Jesus battle with temptations from Satan
	Matt 26:47-56, 27:32-54, 28:1-10	Jesus arrested, killed, risen

**REFLECTION:** How many adventure stories are in the Bible?  
*Just one story. It is God's great adventure with creatures and creation.*

*Read Quinten McCool Monday*

## DAY 2, TUESDAY

## LIFE AS ADVENTURE

**OBJECTIVES:** To help kids consider whether life is a total adventure filled with a cyclical variety of adventures or a humdrum interrupted by occasional excitement. This is about coping skills:  
If non-exciting time is wasted then life is under-appreciated. If life is not seen as cyclical, then a big downer can be overwhelming. This is about perspective, hope, and the joy of life.

**FOCUS:** You are sitting around "being" and anticipating your next activity. Is this "dead - throw away" time, ie. useless, boring, wasted time - string that connects the "pearls" ie. adventures? OR Is this enjoyable rest, appreciated as part of the rhythm of the adventure of life? This is an especially relevant question to ask during the COVID-19 quarantine when staying home is so necessary.

**QUERY:** Do you see life as an adventure or as some sort of "string" that connects adventures? Say something about these ideas: Adventure makes life exciting. Life makes adventure possible.

Does life fit the definition of adventure? Is there a goal or treasure to be found? Is life unusual? Exciting? Dangerous? Name some risks we face in life.

**EXPRESSION:** Do a personal life-line (timeline) identifying significant encounters, challenges, events, illnesses, changes, etc. Put your future goals on the line. What are you headed for? What is your quest? Where is your life going?

**EXPLANATION:** Look at your life-line and see if you see if a pattern. Talk about your life as a string of beads, as an ongoing cycle of seasons of action and rest, or as whatever pattern you find. Does the way you view your life have any effect on how you live your life or how you face challenges, hard times, and difficulties? If so, why? If not, why not?

### **BIBLE:**

**TELL:** The life we are called to as Christians is one filled with risk. In fact, there are a lot of things that we are called to do that are so scary that most of us don't want to do them. The good news is that Christ promised to help us with whatever challenges we encounter!

**READ:** Matthew 6:33 - Seek first the kingdom  
Matthew 10:5-16 – Disciples go on an adventure; Sheep among the wolves

### **Read Quinten McCool Tuesday**

**REFLECTION:** What is the danger in seeing life as a series of adventures separated by spaces of waiting?  
What is the advantage of the "Big Adventure" perspective?  
If we see each adventure as an isolated event, unrelated to what we have experienced before, or what may follow, then one big difficulty can lead us to despair; we may spend the time between adrenaline highs passively wasting our lives waiting for "something to happen;" we may forget that we can make things happen in our lives.  
If we see life as cyclical, we know that today's downer will resolve into tomorrow's growth.

What is God's excellent adventure? **LIFE!** Us, together in life with God!

***COVENANT:***

Invite your kids to commit to view life as a great cyclical adventure in partnership with God.

## DAY 3, WEDNESDAY

## MAPS, GEAR, AND GUIDES

**OBJECTIVES:** To help children see the need for intentionality in their lives. If we don't know where we are going, we WILL end up someplace else. Jesus is the guide and the life he lived is the map. Discovering the Kingdom of God is the greatest adventure of all. Develop a "Life Adventure Goal" to save and remind them where they're heading.

### **FOCUS:**

**ACTION:** Do a blind fold trust walk without a specific destination or objective. Afterward, talk about the need for a guide and some kind of map or direction.

**QUERY:** What useful and necessary things help us have a successful life journey or adventure? *Map, compass, guide, vision, tools and equipment, experience, instincts, resilience, confidence, strength equal to the tasks, guide, etc. (Knowing where you are going!)*

**EXPRESSION:** Find a creative way to answer the question, "What is your "Life Adventure Goal?" (They may want to refer to the last point of yesterday's life-line.) Create a poem, symbol, drawing, story, or miming routine, etc. to symbolize their goal.

**EXPLANATION:** How did you choose that goal? How does anyone choose a life-goal?

### **BIBLE:**

**TELL:** Different maps and guides lead to different treasures. Look at some different maps, treasures and guides. *What are some bad maps to follow? (If your kids are old enough you can talk about drugs, money, various "isms," or any other goals that might lead them down the wrong path).*

**READ:** Matthew 6:24 - No one can serve two masters  
Matthew 7:15-20 - False prophets

**REFLECTION:** Say something about this idea:  
*"If you don't know where you're going you'll end up someplace else."*  
Where does the Kingdom of God fit into your goals? Can you have goals in different categories? Must your goals be compatible with each other? What goals are compatible with helping to build the Kingdom of God?  
*It is important to be intentional in life. Set goals and pursue them. The most important goal for a Christian is to live a life of faith, service, and loving relationships. Your goals should be compatible with who you are as a child of God.*

**COVENANT:** Ask your kids to write down their life-goals on a card and put it in a safe place such as a wallet. Look at it at least once a year to see if your goals change, if you still know where you are going, and if you are on track.

*Read Quinten McCool Wednesday*

## DAY 4, THURSDAY

## THE TANGLED WEB

**OBJECTIVES:** To wrestle with the idea that our best plans are subject to surprises. Our adventures (lives) bounce off those of others and directions are changed. Sometimes we are sidetracked, sometimes reversed, sometimes shown a new direction. To help kids see how the Grace of God frees them to live a life of love and adventure.

### FOCUS:

**ACTION:** Ask kids to reflect on their plans for life (steps in how they reach their goal), and begin to draw out the idea that plans are always subject to surprises.

**QUERY:** What happens when surprises change our plans, directions, or goals?  
What shapes our adventure and the way we live it? *People, Events, Health, etc.*

**EXPRESSION:** Make a web of your life from birth (or earlier) to whatever your goals are as you now see them. Highlight events or encounters in your life that changed your goals, plans, or direction. For example: I wanted to run short sprints in track, but the coach said I was a natural jumper...so I jump. I wanted to play the bassoon in the school orchestra, but the bassoon was destroyed in a fire and wasn't replaced so I couldn't.

NOTE: this is different from the life-line because this should show how different things are connected - not just the order in which they happened. (It's a "this led to this" type of activity, not just a timeline).

**EXPLANATION:** Have your child give you a tour of his/her web. Whose adventures does your adventure intersect or bump off of? Share you web with them.

### BIBLE:

**TELL:** In a poem, Robert Burns wrote, "The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry."  
What does that mean?  
Some people have a hard time adjusting when things happen that change their plans. Even Jesus was affected by powers, people, and events that reshaped life around him.

**READ:** Mark 1:16-45  
:16-20 - Call of James and John  
:21-28 - Man with an unclean spirit  
:29-31 - Healing Simon's mother-in-law  
:32-34 - Crowds looking for healing at sundown  
:35-39 - Prayer in the morning  
:40-45 - Healing a leper

### Read Quinten McCool Thursday

**REFLECTION:** What intersecting adventures in the world make our time a special adventure?  
How did Jesus deal with powers, people, and events that shaped his plans?  
Yesterday we talked about knowing where you are going, but what good does it do if surprises can change your directions and goals?  
What can help us deal with the forces and changes that affect us?  
*Faith and trust in Jesus, reading scripture, spending time in prayer or in silence, support from family & friends*

***COVENANT:*** Adopt an open and adventurous attitude toward change and surprises trusting in God.

**DAY 5, FRIDAY**

***PREME DIEM!***

**OBJECTIVES:** To help your children see the excitement of risking themselves in faith to find and share the fullness of life in Christ. Squeeze the day!

**FOCUS:**

**ACTION:** Squeeze a toothpaste tube, a shampoo bottle, or an orange. (Really get into it!)

**QUERY:** What happens if you don't squeeze out all you can?  
*There would be a lot of waste if everyone in the world wasted the last squeeze. It adds up to lots of stuff.*

**EXPRESSION:** Draw a tube of toothpaste or an orange and show what you would like to squeeze out of it if it were a day.

**EXPLANATION:** Explain what is important to you about days that are fully spent - squeezed empty. How do you know when you have done it?

**BIBLE:**

**TELL:** Life is God's excellent adventure. We are born into the adventure and we are called to raise the stakes in the adventure by risking ourselves for the sake of the Gospel and the Kingdom of God. If we don't squeeze all the juice out of every day, a lot of life would be wasted that could be used to build the Kingdom. Look at Jesus' life as an example: How did Jesus squeeze the juice out of a day? Think about the following parable and what it says about squeezing the most of out life.

**READ:**

Matthew 25:14-29      Parable of the talents  
Luke 5: 15-16        The importance of taking time to rest too

**REFLECTION:** Not just the "religious" stuff, but all life belongs to God. The serious stuff and the fun; the service and the being served. If God has given us our lives, our talents, and other people with whom to share God's Excellent Adventure, then God is concerned about all the ways we live our lives. What does it mean to **SQUEEZE THE DAY!** and **LIVE THE ADVENTURE?** How does prayer figure into the adventure?

***Read Quinten McCool Friday***

**COVENANT:** Make sure you squeeze all the juice out of every day!