QCCC is proud to present our camp devotional series. This devotional series is designed for you to use whilst on camp or retreat to help you or your group connect and do business with God as you immerse yourself in God's rich creation.

DAY 1: THE HEAVENS TELL OF THE GLORY OF GOD

PRINCIPLE: God's First Instruction for Humanity (Genesis 1:28-30)

KEY PASSAGE:

Psalm 19:1-4 (NIV)

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.

REFLECTION:

Look Outside: In Australia, it's rare to find an ugly Christian campsite. Decades ago, the pioneers of Christian camping secured some of the most breathtaking parts of God's creation, recognising that the Great Outdoors is essential to a meaningful camp experience. As you arrive at our facility, take a moment within the first few hours to step away in silence and solitude. Use all your senses–sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing–to fully immerse yourself in the beauty of your surroundings. Take it in. Enjoy it. And in that stillness, listen–perhaps God has something to say to you in that moment.

DEVOTIONAL:

Recently, an environmentalist visited one of our sites to learn about our Creation Care efforts. By the end of their visit, they admitted to surprise to see a Christian organisation so committed to Outdoor Education. They had assumed that Christians believe the world is simply "waiting to burn" while they prepare for a "so-called better place". This view, however, does not align with the broader message of the Bible regarding creation care.

From the very beginning, God entrusted humanity with the responsibility to care for the earth and live in harmony with nature (Genesis 1:28). The Apostle Paul, writing to the early church in Rome, emphasised that "all of Creation is eagerly waiting to see God's children step into their true purpose" (Romans 8:20). He goes on to remind us that part of God's plan is to restore the natural world from the effects of change and decay (Romans 8:21).

Scripture also teaches that God reveals Himself through nature and delights in it. Psalm 19 and Psalm 146:6, along with Colossians 1:15-17, emphasise that Creation is excellent in every way (Genesis 1:30). This concept, known as General Revelation, helps people recognise the existence of a Creator and serves as a powerful starting point for sharing the gospel.

When people are immersed in the beauty of rainforests, oceans, and galaxies, they often find it hard to ignore the evidence of intelligent design. The complexity of the natural world remains one of our strongest tools for evangelism (Romans 1:20).

It may seem surprising, but the harsh realities of the Western Front during World War One inspired profound poetry. Army chaplain G.A. Studdert Kennedy even captured these experiences in his book, An Unutterable Beauty.

I AND MY ROSE - *by A Studdert-Kennedy – Unutterable Beauty*

There is a world of wonder in this rose;
God made it, and His whole creation grows
To a point of perfect beauty
In this garden plot.

All mysteries
In this one flower meet
And intertwine,
The universal is concrete
The human and divine,
In one unique and perfect thing, are fused.

This rose as I behold it;
For all things gave it to me,
The stars have helped to mould it,
The air, soft moonshine, and the rain,
The meekness of old mother earth,
The many-billowed sea.
The evolution of ten million years,
And all the pain
Of ages, brought it to its birth
And gave it to me.

The tears
Of Christ are in it,
And His Blood
Has dyed it red,
I could not see it but for Him
Because He led
Me to the Love of God,
From which all Beauty springs.
I and my rose
Are one.

As you begin your first day of camp, take a moment to notice God's presence in the beauty around you. Commit yourself to caring for and nurturing His creation.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. When was the last time you intentionally sought God in the silence and beauty of the natural world He has given us? (Psalm 62:1,5)
2. If all of creation is eagerly waiting for us to step into our true purpose, how can we help protect and restore the world from the effects of change and decay? (Romans 8:18-25)

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES:

1. List some practical ways you can care for the planet after camp–small changes in your daily routine that help you tread lightly and steward creation well.
2. Set aside at least five minutes each day for quiet reflection outdoors, listening for God's voice in the stillness.

PRAYER:

Almighty God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, let me hear Your voice in the silence...

Make yourself a coffee, grab your Bible, and dive in to day two's devotional as we slow down to listen to what the word of God has for us today.

DAY 2: AS WE DO OUR WORK FOR GOD

PRINCIPLE: Jesus' Rule for Life (Matthew 22:34-40)

KEY PASSAGE:

Romans 12:9-15 (JB Phillips)

Let us have no imitation Christian love. Let us have a genuine break with evil and a real devotion to good. Let us have real warm affection for one another, and a willingness to let the other person have the credit. Let us not allow slackness to spoil our work and let us keep the fires of the spirit burning, as we do our work for God. Base your happiness on your hope in Christ. When trials come endure them patiently, steadfastly maintain the habit of prayer. Give freely to fellow-Christians in want, never grudging a meal or a bed to those who need them. As for those who try to make your life a misery, bless them. Don't curse, bless. Share the happiness of those who are happy, the sorrow of those who are sad.

REFLECTION:

Look Around: Day Two of camp is often your first–and sometimes only–full day with your camp community. Life at camp is meant to slow down, and our staff are here to support and enrich your experience.

Use this time to build deeper connections with those around you. Linger at the meal table, engage in meaningful conversations, and look for opportunities to serve others. As the day begins, take five minutes to reflect on how you can be a blessing to those in your group today.

DEVOTIONAL:

The writer of the book of James was likely Jesus' younger brother, meaning he may have spent more time with Him than any other biblical author. That's why his words carry such weight when he writes, "faith without the right actions is dead and useless." The theme of helping others runs throughout the Bible. The Psalms remind us that God gives justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry (Psalm 146:7). The Apostle Peter encourages the church to be God's hands and feet, "offering hospitality to one another without grumbling" (1 Peter 4:8-9). After listing the great heroes of faith (Hebrews 11), the book of Hebrews challenges believers to "continue to love each other with true Christian love" and to "show hospitality to strangers" (Hebrews 13:1-2).

Jesus often used meals as a way to teach, welcome, and serve people. He was even criticised for it, being called a "drunkard and a glutton" (Matthew 11:9). But throughout the Bible and church history, hospitality and welcoming strangers have been central to God's mission.

Paul reinforces the importance of love in action, writing: "If I speak with the eloquence of men and angels but have no love, I become no more than a clanging gong or a crashing cymbal" (1 Corinthians 13:1). Loving others isn't about one grand gesture–it's about the small choices we make every day. Look around, notice the needs around you, and find ways to serve in practical ways.

PATIENCE - *by A Studdert-Kennedy - Unutterable Beauty*

Sometimes I wish that I might do
Just one grand deed and die,
And by that one grand deed reach up
To meet God in the sky.
But such is not Thy way, O God,
Not such is Thy decree,
But deed by deed, and tear by tear,
Our souls must climb to Thee,
As climbed the only Son of God
From manger unto Cross,
Who learned, through tears and bloody sweat,
To count this world but loss;
Who left the Virgin Mother's Arms
To seek those arms of shame,
Outstretched upon the lonely hill
To which the darkness came.
As deed by deed, and tear by tear,
He climbed up to the height,
Each deed a splendid deed, each tear
A jewel shining bright,
So grant us, Lord, the patient heart,
To climb the upward way,
Until we stand upon the height,
And see the perfect day.

When Jesus taught the Great Commandment–to love your neighbour as yourself–someone immediately asked, "Who is my neighbour?" True to His teaching style, Jesus responded with a story featuring an unexpected hero. In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), Jesus chose a Samaritan–a member of a group despised by His Jewish listeners–to demonstrate true love and compassion. It was as if He was saying, "If even someone like this can show love, why can't you?" Jesus' message was clear: Loving your neighbour isn't optional–it includes everyone, even those who are different from us or difficult to love.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Am I truly valuing and treasuring God in every area of my life?
2. Is there someone I find difficult to value as my neighbour? Why do I struggle with them? What might Jesus say to me about this?
3. Who can I come alongside to encourage and support?

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES:

1. Commit to being a positive presence in at least one person's day today. Make this a habit that continues beyond camp, shaping how you live every day.
2. List ways you can make a meaningful impact in your home and community–how could you live so that if you moved away, people would truly miss you?

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the people around me today. Help me to see them as You do–made in Your image and deeply valued. Open my eyes to those I can bless and serve and guide me in showing Your love to them.

Grab your Bible and find a comfortable spot outside as you start day three's devotional and immerse yourself in the word of God.

DAY 3:

PRINCIPLE: God's Great Adventure (Matthew 28:18-20)

KEY PASSAGE:

ACTS 1:7-8 (JB Phillips)

Jesus replied, "You cannot know times and dates which have been fixed by the Father's sole authority. But you are to be given power when the Holy Spirit has come to you. You will be witnesses to me, not only in Jerusalem, not only throughout Judea, not only in Samaria, but to the very ends of the earth!"

Hebrews 12:1-3 (JB Phillips)

Surrounded then as we are by these serried ranks of witnesses, let us strip off everything that hinders us, as well as the sin which dogs our feet, and let us run the race that we have to run with patience, our eyes fixed on Jesus the source and the goal of our faith. For he himself endured a cross and thought nothing of its shame because of the joy he knew would follow his suffering; and he is now seated at the right hand of God's throne. Think constantly of him enduring all that sinful men could say against Him and you will not lose your purpose or your courage.

REFLECTION:

Look Up: Day Three of camp is often your last, and your thoughts will naturally turn toward home. Camps are sometimes called "mountaintop experiences," with the journey back seen as a return to the valley–but we see it differently.

We hope your time at camp has been one of refreshment and renewal, equipping you to return home re-energised and ready to make a difference in the world around you.

As you prepare to leave, take a moment to pause, pray, and reflect. Look heavenward and ask God what changes He is calling you to make–so that your life continues to bless and encourage others long after camp ends.

DEVOTIONAL:

Most Christians are familiar with the Great Commission, but how often do we truly consider what it means? At its core, Jesus calls us to make disciples–to teach others everything He demonstrated and lived out. This is not a quick task; it requires time, commitment, and deep, lasting relationships.

The writer of Hebrews urges us to "fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith" (Hebrews 12:2 NIV). This echoes the wisdom of the Psalms: "I lift up my eyes to the mountains; where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2).

A disciple of Jesus is someone who follows Him, is transformed by Him, commits to His mission, and invites others to do the same. Living out the Great Commission means we should both seek mentors and be mentors, always remembering the example of Jesus, who came from Heaven to dwell among us. As John reminds us, "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him" (John 3:17).

FAITH - *by A Studdert-Kennedy - Unutterable Beauty*

How do I know that God is good?
I don't.
I gamble like a man. I bet my life
Upon one side in life's great war.
I must, I can't stand out.
I must take sides.
The one who is a neutral in this fight is not
A soul.
They're bulk and body without breath.
I can't stand shiv'ring on the bank.
I plunge
Head first. I bet my life on Beauty, Truth,
And Love, not abstract but incarnate Truth,
Not Beauty's passing shadow but its Self.
It's very self made flesh, Love realised.
I bet my life on Christ - Christ Crucified.

Shortly after Jesus gave the Great Commission, Paul reminded the early church of its importance, writing, "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ" (Colossians 1:28). Just like a fine bottle of wine, spiritual maturity takes time, effort, and patience. The commitment required to disciple others–and to be discipled–can feel overwhelming. But Jesus reassures us at the very start of the Great Commission that we are not alone. All power in heaven and earth has been given to Him, and He is with us every step of the way. Ultimately, discipleship is a beautiful journey. Isaiah paints a powerful image of its impact: "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns" (Isaiah 52:7). Our mountaintop moments don't have to fade–we can carry their inspiration with us into everyday life.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Who in your life encourages and inspires you to follow Jesus more faithfully?
2. Who in your life can you encourage and inspire to grow in their faith and walk with Jesus?

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES:

1. Write a letter of gratitude to someone who has played a meaningful role in your faith journey, thanking them for their guidance and encouragement.
2. Make a list of people you can encourage and inspire in their faith journey. Think of practical ways to invest in their spiritual growth–whether through prayer, mentoring, sharing Scripture, or simply being a supportive presence in their life.

PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, thank You for inviting us into Your great adventure–to be Your disciples and to take part in bringing redemption to the world. As I prepare to return home, guide me to wise mentors who will help me grow, and show me those whom I can mentor in turn. May we walk together in faith, sharing Your goodness with the world.

We trust you have been enjoying our 'Real Life' camp and retreat devotionals. Dive into God's word today and be richly blessed by what he has for us.

AFTER CAMP

PRINCIPLE: The Sweet Spot

KEY PASSAGES:

2 Corinthians 6:10 (JB Phillips)

As far as we are concerned we do not wish to stand in anyone's way, nor do we wish to bring discredit on the ministry God has given us. Indeed we want to prove ourselves genuine ministers of God whatever we have to go through - patient endurance of troubles or even disasters, being flogged or imprisoned; being mobbed, having to work like slaves, having to go without food or sleep.

All this we want to meet with sincerity, with insight and patience; by sheer kindness and the Holy Spirit; with genuine love, speaking the plain truth, and living by the power of God. Our sole defence, our only weapon, is a life of integrity, whether we meet honour or dishonour, praise or blame. Called "impostors" we must be true, called "nobodies" we must be in the public eye. Never far from death, yet here we are alive, always "going through it" yet never "going under". We know sorrow, yet our joy is inextinguishable. We have "nothing to bless ourselves with" yet we bless many others with true riches. We are penniless, and yet in reality we have everything worth having.

Romans 12:1-2 (JB Phillips)

With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.

REFLECTION:

Finding your Sweet Spot: During our time at camp, we explored the three key commands God has given to humanity:

1. Caring for and stewarding the earth.
2. Loving and serving our neighbours.
3. Living like Jesus and encouraging others to do the same.

It's often said that an unreflected experience is a wasted one. James reminds us: "Don't, I beg you, only hear the message, but put it in practice; otherwise you are merely deluding yourselves" (James 1:22). Before you leave camp, take some time in solitude with a notebook–whether physical or digital–and reflect on the changes you want to make in your life. Commit them to memory and action

DEVOTIONAL:

In his letter to the Romans, Paul urges believers to let God transform their minds from the inside out, warning them not to let the world "squeeze you into its own mould."
Throughout Scripture, God gives humanity three key tasks:

1. The Creation Mandate – To care for and steward God's creation.
2. The Commandment Mandate – To love and serve our neighbours, including Jesus' challenge to "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44).
3. The Commission Mandate – To be disciples and make disciples, sharing God's goodness with the world.

Like the Trinity, these three mandates must stay in balance. Focusing too much on one while neglecting the others can create a spiritual imbalance, like a wheel that wobbles when it's out of alignment. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus reminds us not to worry about what we will eat, drink, or wear, reassuring us that our Heavenly Father knows our needs. Instead, He calls us to "set our hearts on the kingdom and God's goodness, and all these things will come to you as a matter of course" (Matthew 6:33). Some believe this verse is better translated as "seek only God's kingdom." This is where the three mandates come together–where we find true fulfillment and purpose. This is our life's work.

WORK - *by A Studdert-Kennedy – Unutterable Beauty*

Close by the careless worker's side
Still patient stands
The Carpenter of Nazareth,
With pierced hands
Outstretched to plead unceasingly,
His Love's demands.
Longing to pick the hammer up
And strike a blow,
Longing to feel his plane swinging out,
Steady and slow,
The fragrant shavings falling down,
Silent as snow.
Because this is my Work, O Lord,
It must be Thine,
Because it is a human task
It is divine.
Take me, and brand me with Thy Cross,
Thy slave's proud sign.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul presents a big vision of what true worship looks like. He describes "intelligent worship" as: "With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, give Him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to Him and acceptable by Him." When we live this way, we "prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all His demands, and moves towards the goal of true maturity" (Romans 12:1-2). Let's commit ourselves to this kind of wholehearted worship, offering our lives fully to God.

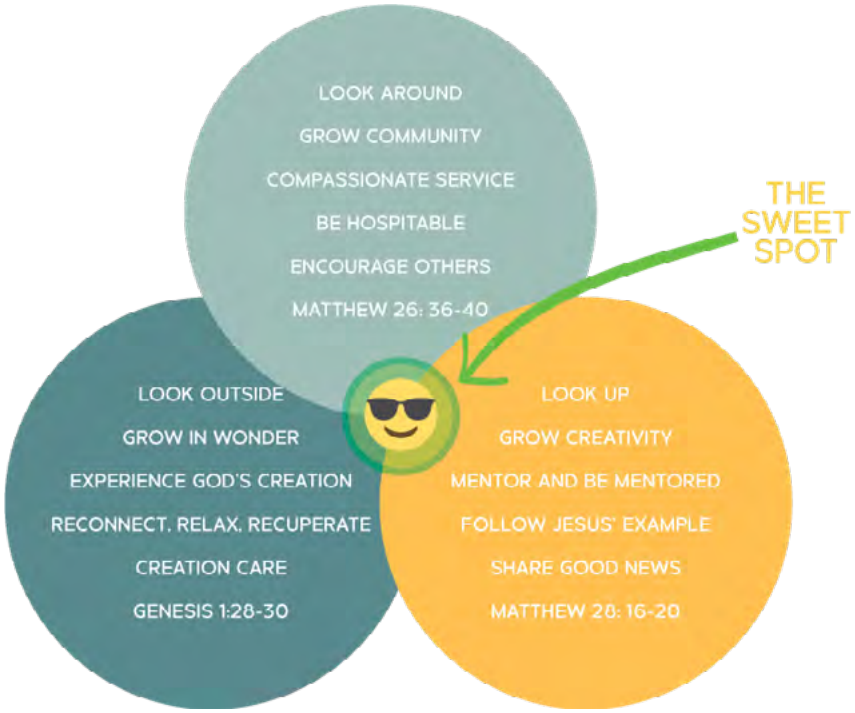
REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:

1. Am I truly committed to living out the three mandates God has given–caring for creation, loving and serving others, and making disciples? What changes do I need to make for this to become a reality in my life?
2. Where is my sweet spot–the place where my gifts and talents align with God's purpose? How can I use what He has given me to bless His creation and serve His people?

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES:

1. Display the "Triple Mandate" graphic in a visible place at home as a daily reminder of your sweet spot–where your gifts, passions, and God's purpose align.
2. Make a two-column list: In the first column, write down the things you are most passionate about. In the second, reflect on how each passion can be used to bless others and serve God's mission.

PRAYER:

Giver of Life, thank You for all You have given me. In response, I offer myself freely–a living sacrifice, devoted to serving You and sharing Your good news with the world. Show me how to use the gifts, talents, and abilities You have entrusted to me for the life of the world.

TRIPLE MANDATE: