

ROYAL RANGERS LEADER'S GUIDE

DEVOTIONS FOR BOYS





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Compiled by John Eller

GOSPEL PUBLISHING HOUSE
Springfield, Missouri
02-0714

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by the Gospel Publishing House
Springfield, Missouri 65802

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Printed in the United States of America

Sixth Printing 1987

INTRODUCTION

Devotions are the most important phase of a successful outpost meeting. Leaders have the opportunity to present spiritual truth that can change a boy's conduct, alter his attitude, or lead to his acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour. Preparation should be made through Bible study and prayer in view of outpost needs. The following guidelines may be helpful in the preparation of devotions:

1. Select one spiritual truth for emphasis and develop your devotion around it. One strong point is of more value than several weaker ones.

2. Always use a simple story, illustration, or demonstration that is related to your point. Complicated and irrelevant descriptions should be avoided.

3. When feasible, guide the boys in a discussion on how a particular truth applies to their individual lives. If they know you may invite participation it will help retain their interest.

4. A closing ceremony that will give the boys an opportunity for response or commitment will make spiritual truth more lasting. Involvement of the boys should be the aim of all devotions.

5. The guidance of the Holy Spirit is of utmost importance in your presentation. Timing can play a very vital role and produce gratifying results.

In addition to the contents of this volume, other suitable devotional material can be found in the *Leader's Manual*, *Dispatch*, *High Adventure*, and can, of course, also be drawn from your own resources of personal knowledge, experience, and observation.

JOHN ELLER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is a collection of devotions from many different sources. The list is too long to mention all by name; however, we would like to express our indebtedness and special thanks to all these individuals and to *Dispatch* magazine, which was one of our major sources.

Legacy for a Boy

I would not leave you riches
For that you can amass;
But I shall point you beauty
In a slender blade of grass.

I would not leave you power
For power walks alone;
But I shall teach you brotherhood
And kindnesses I've known.

I would not leave you sweet content
For I would have you climb;
So I shall lift your face to stars
Where heaven's blessings shine.

I would not leave you much of worth
According to men on earth;
For I . . . with Hope and Faith as themes
Endow you with my wealth of dreams.

—MERRY BROWNE

HELP FROM ABOVE

Purpose: To impress the unsaved boys with their need of God.

Item needed: Some type of microphone.

Story: Several years ago, a diver was lowered into the ocean to examine the wreckage of a ship. As he was examining the wreckage, suddenly, out of the inky blackness of the water, a giant octopus loomed before him. Within seconds, the giant creature encircled the man's body with its tentacles. The diver began to struggle desperately as the octopus attempted to squeeze the life from him. Gripping his emergency signal cord, he began to tug frantically for help. When the men on the ship's deck saw his signal they quickly pulled him free and lifted him on deck. Later, when describing this experience, the diver stated, "The one major fact that filled my mind was, *I must have help from above.*"

Fellows, sin is like an octopus. It grips our hearts and tries to destroy our souls. When sin is in our lives, we too must have help from above. When we send the signal to heaven that we need God's help, thank God, He will lift us out of our sins and put peace and joy in our hearts.

Ceremony: In my hand is a mike. Wouldn't it be wonderful if I could say, "Now, fellows, someone has invented a radio that reaches to heaven. If you speak into this mike, you can actually talk with someone in heaven"? We, of

course, know this is not mechanically possible. However, through prayer it *is* possible! When we pray we have a direct line to heaven and we may talk with the Lord Jesus.

As we form a circle and have our prayer time, I want each of you to talk with Jesus. If you are not a Christian, ask for help from above to become a Christian. Whatever your need is, God is willing to help you.

THE GRASSHOPPER THAT STARTED A WAR

Purpose: To help boys see the evil of quarreling.

Story: There were two tribes of Indians living in Pennsylvania—one was Shawnee and the other Delaware. At play one day, a Shawnee boy found a grasshopper. A Delaware boy wanted it. The boys scratched and screamed and fought.

Their mothers ran to see. Each thought her boy should have the grasshopper. Then they began to fight, and all the squaws took sides and began to fight too.

When the braves came home from hunting, the women told them what had happened. War was declared between the two tribes; many battles were fought; some men were crippled, others were killed, and neither side got the grasshopper.

Selfishness in the heart of a boy had caused it all. Have you ever heard one boy say to another, "That is mine, you can't have it"? Remember this story of the grasshopper war, and what sad things grew out of selfishness.

Ceremony: Fellows, we don't want a lot of quarreling in our outpost, do we? Boys who fuss and quarrel make it unpleasant for everyone else. Each of your fellow Royal Rangers is your friend. Real friends share with each other and help each other. Tonight, we are going to join hands and form a friendship circle. We should pray for God to help us not to be quarrelsome and troublesome and also to help each of us to be a real friend to our fellow Rangers.

THE EAGLE WHO WAITED TOO LONG

Purpose: To emphasize the folly of putting off spiritual decision.

Story: One day an eagle was flying above a certain river. It was during the spring thaw and the river was filled with large chunks of ice. Suddenly he spied the carcass of a rabbit floating down the river on a chunk of ice. The eagle immediately pounced upon the animal and began to devour it.

Down the river some distance was a large waterfall. The eagle knew that eventually the ice would go over the falls. He reasoned thus: "I will eat until the last possible moment; then I will spread my wings and fly away." The ice chunk rushed on its way to the falls. The eagle kept on eating. Finally, just as the ice chunk reached the brink of the falls, the eagle spread his wings to fly away, but discovered to his dismay that his feet were frozen to the ice. He plunged over the falls to his destruction.

Fellows, the moral of this story is: Don't put off spiritual decision; you may wait too long. Perhaps you have said in your heart, "Someday I'm going to accept Christ as my Saviour," or perhaps you have thought, "Someday I'm going to be filled with the Holy Spirit." Fellows, it's dangerous to wait; *now* is the time to make your decision.

Ceremony: We want every fellow here who has been thinking of making some spiritual decision, but has been "putting it off," to come and stand here before me. We want to pray a special prayer for you that you will make that decision now.

I HAD RATHER BE RIGHT

Purpose: To emphasize the need of courage to live by our convictions.

Item needed: A sheet of paper labeled, "I had rather be right than be popular."

Story: One of the great men in our American history was Henry Clay. On one occasion he was preparing for a presi-

dential campaign when a certain issue arose in Congress. Because of his opposition to this issue he wrote a speech expressing his views. Before presenting his speech to Congress, he called a friend into his office and asked him to read his speech. The gentleman exclaimed in amazement, "Mr. Clay, if you present this to Congress it will cost you the presidency of the United States." Henry Clay answered, "That's not the question. The question is, do you think I am right?" The man replied, "Yes, sir, I believe you are right." Then Henry Clay gave this inspiring answer: "I had rather be right than be president of the United States."

Fellows, it took a lot of courage for Henry Clay to make such a statement. Sometimes it takes far more courage to live up to our convictions of right and wrong than it does to face danger. A boy who does the right thing in spite of criticism sometimes has more courage than the boy who does a dangerous feat.

Ceremony: Fellows, in my hand is a sheet of paper. At the top are these words, "I had rather be right than be popular." Now I want all of you who are willing to make this pledge to sign your name to this sheet of paper. We will then put it in our files as a record of your commitment. After we sign the paper, let us pray together that God will give us courage always to do that which is right.

GOD'S POWER

Purpose: To make the boys aware of the need of God's supernatural power for salvation.

Item needed: A medium-sized rope.

Story: When your National Commander was a boy, he lived on a small Texas ranch. One day a calf waded out into a quicksand bog in the river. Suddenly the calf began to sink. He fought and struggled to reach shore, but the more he struggled, the deeper he sank until he had sunk up to his stomach. There he lay bawling for help.

His mother rushed to the edge of the bog and bawled her encouragement, but that was all she could do. All the other cattle surrounded the bog and mooed their sympathy.

But that was all they could do. This calf needed a power beyond the cattle kingdom to help him. Quickly Johnnie tossed a rope around the little calf's neck. Tying the rope around his saddlehorn, he slowly pulled the small animal to solid ground. Shaking himself free from water and mud, the calf romped for joy, and all the other cattle joined in.

Fellows, a sinner is like that little calf. He is bound in the miry clay of sin. His friends and parents may pray for him and encourage him, but it takes a power beyond human power to set him free from a sinful life. He needs God's power to save him! However, when he cries to God for help, God will lower His liferope of grace and lift him from his sins and make him free.

Ceremony: Fellows, we are going to form a circle and each one will grip this rope. The rope represents God's grace. As we pray together, if any of you are not Christians, I want you to firmly grip the rope and pray for God to set you free from sin and make your heart clean.

SEEING GOOD IN OTHERS

Story: The famous humorist Will Rogers made the statement on one occasion, "I have never met anyone that I didn't find something about him I liked." Fellows, we should make a practice of seeing the good in others.

At a meeting a man held up a sheet of white paper with a large black spot on it, and asked his audience, "What do you see?" They all answered, "A black spot." He then asked, "Why don't you see the white? There is so much more white than black."¹

How easy it is, when looking at others, to see a small flaw before finding the many praiseworthy things. Do you see good or evil in others?

Ceremony: The Osage Indians had a special ceremony when someone was honored in the tribe. In the center of a circle was a stake, on the top of which was tied a dove. An Indian would approach the stake with a small stick in his hand. He would then relate to the tribe some good thing

¹You may wish to try this experiment on your boys.

the honored guest had done. After finishing, he would lay his stick at the foot of the stake. This was repeated by everyone in the tribe who wished to participate. After the ceremony, the dove was released to fly to and fro, reminding them that there was much good in all people.

Fellows, tonight I have several small sticks. I am going to give one to each of you. Now I want each of you to think of something good about someone here in your outpost. Step forward and lay your stick on the table and tell the group what you like about the person. Don't repeat—if someone chooses one boy, you choose another.

Now let's form a friendship circle and pray together.

MOMENT OF DECISION

There are districts in an eastern country where the people rely to some extent on wild birds' eggs for their food. These birds build their nests high on precipitous rocks.

One day a hunter discovered a large nest about a hundred feet below him. The overhanging rock from which he could see the nest made it difficult for him to get to it.

Being accustomed to such difficulties, he drove his large iron stake into the ground; and fixing his rope around it, he proceeded to let himself over the cliff. Safely, he descended to the level of the nest.

However, to reach the nest it was necessary to swing to and fro, until, by degrees, his feet touched the ledge where the nest was situated. He determined that on the next swing to the ledge he would spring and balance himself so as to stand upright on the ledge. With skilled hands and steady nerves, he safely accomplished this; but while he congratulated himself, he momentarily forgot himself and let go of the rope. He watched as the coil and seat attached to it swung away.

Instantly, he realized the danger he was in. As the rope swung away and began to return toward him, he knew he must leap for the rope on its return, or he would be trapped on the ledge. With one leap, he sprang from the ledge and caught the rope. This had been his moment of

decision. It was his one chance to be saved.

Fellows, there are moments of decision in everyone's life. There is a time when the Holy Spirit draws very near, and we have to make a decision whether we will give up sin and yield ourselves to Jesus Christ; or whether we will refuse His free gift of salvation and eternal life. This may be your time of decision. The Bible says, "Be sure your sin will find you out." However, Jesus loves you so much that He gave Himself on the cross to cleanse you of your sin.

Ceremony: This is your moment of decision. Don't pass it by. Open your heart to Him as we pray.

HIS OWN ROPE

There was a man who lived in a very small European town. He was a ropemaker by trade. He put the best materials money could buy into each rope. His name became widely known, and his ropes came to be more and more in demand. It became necessary for him to hire helpers and move into a large building. His business continued to grow. He decided he could make more money by putting cheaper material in the ropes. Greed came into his heart. He began using inferior materials and became richer and richer.

One day he decided to go on a cruise around the world. A few days out at sea a storm arose. It grew worse and worse. After being in his cabin for several days, the man went up on deck for a breath of fresh air. While he was on deck a large wave washed him overboard. A crewman threw him a life ring and began pulling him to safety. Suddenly the rope broke. The crewman was puzzled because the rope was new. It was discovered later that the rope was made by the man who drowned.

Galatians 6:7 states, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Be sure you are sowing the right thing.

Ceremony: The life we live will either save or destroy us. I challenge each of you to dedicate your life to Christ and make a "good rope." Let us stand and join hands with the person beside us as we pray.

SINS LEAVE SCARS

Items needed: One 6- x 6-inch plank, or one large, stable log, about 6 inches in diameter, about three feet long; one claw hammer; about six 8-penny nails (with heads).

Purpose: To demonstrate the ease of sinning and the relative difficulty of removing the marks of sin.

For: Buckaroos and Pioneers.

Boys, tonight we're going to see how good a job you can do driving nails into this big hunk of wood. Let's see—I need three big, husky guys right now to demonstrate this for everyone to see. Okay—you three volunteers will do just fine. Here's how we do it: You take one nail, place it on the plank, and you get three hits with the hammer. This ought to be enough to drive the nail deep into the plank. That's right, hit it hard! (The boys take turns and pound their nails into the wood, each to a different depth, as everyone watches closely.)

Okay, boys—looks like you did a bang-up job of driving your nails into the wood. I see that some of you have driven your nail deep into the wood, and others have only gone in a very little way. Now, I want each one of you to pull out his own nail! (There will be a lot of effort on their part, but let them do it, and work up a sweat, if necessary.)

Wow, you guys found out that you drove those nails in deeper than you thought, didn't you? And it was a lot harder to pull them out than it was to put them in, right? Now, let's all gather around and look at the holes in the plank. They're in there for good, aren't they? They'll never come out—right?

You see, boys, sins are like nails driven into our souls—they penetrate our defenses easily, just like the nail going into the soft wood. But when sins, "little" or "big," enter our soul, they are extremely difficult to get rid of. In fact, you *cannot* get rid of those sins by yourself—you need to turn to Jesus, who is the only One who can forgive you of your sins and rid you of their grip on your life.

Another terrible mark is left on your lives when sins are removed. It would be much better if you didn't have them there in the first place, because when they are removed,

they leave a scar. SINS LEAVE SCARS! Don't ever forget it, boys! Those holes in that plank remind us that scars might remain in our lives *permanently!*

The best answer, boys, is to live for Jesus day by day, keeping the victory, by not sinning or letting sins creep into your life. Keep your soul and your body spotlessly clean and pure by obeying Romans 12:1. (Read it aloud.)

Ceremony: Even if you have sinned and have scars, remember that Jesus will forgive you and give you all the strength you need to be a winner for Jesus. Let's bow our heads right now and consecrate our lives completely, making sure that Jesus Christ is our Master Ranger at all times.

LEARNING THE HARD WAY

Purpose: To emphasize the importance of being obedient.

Story: When your National Commander was a boy, he was walking one day with his father. In the course of the walk they passed a persimmon tree. "Oh boy!" cried Johnnie. "I'm going to get me a persimmon to eat."

"No," commanded his father. "They are not ready to eat yet."

Reluctantly, Johnnie obeyed his dad. Later that day, however, Johnnie decided he was going to have a persimmon regardless of what his father said. So, slipping away from his house, he made his way to the tree. He picked the biggest and prettiest persimmon he could find and greedily began to eat it.

Suddenly the green persimmon began to draw his mouth. He spat out the remainder and rushed to a nearby stream and washed out his mouth with water. But water didn't help.

His father smiled and taunted, "Well, son, I guess you found my orders to leave the persimmons alone were for your own good."

"Yes, sir," the boy answered through puckered lips.

Fellows, most rules are made for our own good. The rules we have in Royal Rangers are for your good and the good of the outpost. Our country has laws for the

good of all its citizens. Also, God has certain commandments for the good of everyone. It is a shame for a boy to end up in a hospital before he realizes he shouldn't break traffic laws, or a man to become an alcoholic before realizing he should not drink, or a person to get lung cancer before realizing he shouldn't smoke, or a boy to contract a dreadful disease before realizing he shouldn't break God's moral laws.

Most of man's troubles have come through disobedience. It all started with Adam and Eve's disobeying God in the Garden of Eden and bringing sin on the human race.

Ceremony: The Royal Rangers Code says, "A Royal Ranger is obedient." As we pray, ask God to help you to be obedient.

YOU'RE RICH

Purpose: To teach boys to count their blessings.

Items needed: A pencil and sheet of paper for each boy.

Story: "Oh, my!" said Ben. "I wish I were rich and could have things like some of the boys that go to our school."

"I say, Ben," said his father, turning around quickly. "How much will you take for your legs?"

"For my legs?" said Ben in surprise. "Why I run and jump and play ball, and oh, everything."

"That's so," said the father. "You wouldn't take \$10,000 for them, would you?"

"No, indeed!"

"And your arms—I guess you wouldn't take \$10,000 for them, would you?"

"No, sir."

"And your voice. They tell me you sing quite well, and I know you talk a little bit. You wouldn't part with that for \$10,000 would you?"

"No, sir."

"Nor your good health?"

"No, sir."

"Your hearing and your sense of taste are better than \$5,000 apiece, at the very best, don't you think so?"

"Yes, sir."

"Your eyes, now. How would you like to have \$50,000 and be blind the rest of your life?"

"I wouldn't like it at all!"

"Think a moment, Ben—\$50,000 is a lot of money. Are you very sure you wouldn't sell them for that much?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then, they are worth that much, at least. Let's see now," his father went on figuring on a sheet of paper—"legs 10,000, arms 10, voice 10, hearing five, taste five, good health, 10, and eyes 50—that makes 100. You are worth \$100,000 at the very lowest figures, my boy. Now run and play, jump, throw your ball, laugh and hear your playmates laugh too; look with those 50,000-dollar eyes at the beautiful things about you, and come home with your unusual appetite for dinner, and think now and then how rich you really are."

Ceremony: It is a lot easier for some fellows to complain than count their blessings. We want you to make a list of all your blessings you can think of on these sheets of paper. I think you will be surprised at how many blessings you do have. Now let's pray together and thank God for these blessings.

OBEDIENCE

Purpose: To inspire boys to be obedient.

Story: One sunny day a boy was playing in the field near the ranch where he lived. He was sitting on the ground, making something, when he heard his father's voice saying quietly, "Be perfectly still, and don't move." He was frightened, but he was obedient, and did as his father told him. The next moment a shot rang out, and he learned that a rattlesnake had been coiled up near him ready to strike. If he had moved an inch, the snake would have struck him before his father could shoot it. His obedience saved his life and he was glad he had learned to obey.

There were two reasons for that obedience. One, he was in the habit of obeying. The next, he loved his father, and he knew his father loved him. Willing obedience is one of

the best ways to show our love and respect to our parents, our leaders, and to Jesus.

Ceremony: Fellows, it is extremely important that Royal Rangers learn to be obedient. This is one of the points of the Ranger code. Being obedient is for your good and the good of the group. I want us all to stand together and repeat: "A Royal Ranger is obedient. He obeys his parents, leaders, and those in authority."

Now, let us pray together that God will help us to be obedient.

A LIE WITH HIS FINGER

Purpose: To teach boys the evil of lying.

Story: A little boy, for a trick, pointed his finger to the wrong road when a man asked him which way the doctor went. As a result, the man missed the doctor, and his boy died because the doctor came too late to take a fish bone from the throat.

At the funeral, the minister said that the boy was killed by a lie which another told with his finger. He only wanted to have a little fun. But it was fun that cost somebody a great deal. We ought never to trifle with the truth.

Ceremony: Fellows, it is always wrong to lie. It always damages your character and many times it hurts others. The Ranger code states that a Ranger is honest—that he does not lie, cheat, or steal. I trust none of you are guilty of lying. If you are, you should pray for God's help, for this could become a very serious thing in your life.

Today we are going to have a short time of silent prayer. If you have told a lie, I want you to pray silently for God's forgiveness and help. If you are not guilty, pray for God to continue to help you. (The Commander should conclude in prayer.)

DON'T BE A SHOW-OFF

Purpose: To show boys the folly of pride.

Items needed: A box with a large mirror in it.

Story: Many years ago, Jim, a young man noted for his physical strength, was challenged by a bully. "I'll bet ten dollars," taunted the bully, "that you can't lift the side of my wagon until the wheel clears the ground." Jim politely refused the challenge. Many of his friends were disappointed in him.

Sometime later while on his way home, Jim saw one of his friends in need. A wagon wheel was broken, and the man was trying to pry up the wagon with a pole to remove the wheel. Promptly Jim lifted the wagon, and the man easily slipped off the wheel.

"Jim, I don't understand," the man said. "A while ago you wouldn't accept a challenge of strength, and now you use your muscles without being asked."

Jim replied, "I don't believe God gave me a strong body just to show off."

We too should not be tempted by pride. Whatever we have, whether physical strength, good looks, material possessions, pleasing personality, or deep spirituality, it is given us to use to glorify God.

Ceremony: Fellows, would you like to see what can be your greatest enemy? You can, by looking into this box. (After boys have seen themselves in the mirror say:) Yes, fellows, if we are filled with pride, we ourselves can be our greatest enemy. Now let's bow our heads, and pray that God will help us not to be "show-offs."

A PIECE OF GRAVEL

Purpose: To teach boys that little wrongs can damage their character.

Story: A new submarine sank a short time after it was launched, drowning all its crew. After some days the salvage boat arrived, and divers went down and fixed giant tackles around the sunken ship. Slowly she was brought to the surface with her drowned crew.

Now what was the cause of her loss? It was a small piece of gravel, no bigger than a lump of sugar we would put in a cup of coffee, that had hindered a valve from closing.

So this powerful ship, so mighty for warfare, was lost without a battle. Its crew and all the hopes and affections that followed them were destroyed by "that which is least."

Boys, your lives are charged with even greater powers, and carry a bigger cargo of hope and love. They are meant to fight in the greatest of fights for the kingdom of God. You are meant to be soldiers of Jesus, the greatest King.

Be prepared for the great adventures, the strain of the great temptations, the shock of great sins, but beware also of the things which are least. The little lie that opens the heart to the inrush of a flood of falsehood; the little selfishness, the little unkindness, the little trifling with things forbidden and evil—these are like the little stone that sank the submarine; they may let in the sea of sin and sink your soul.

Ceremony: Fellows, as we pray, let us search our hearts for little things that may hurt us. Then pray for God's help to overcome them.

ETERNAL LIFE

Purpose: To show that there is only one way to receive eternal life.

Story: The Winchester Mystery House at San Jose, California, has 160 rooms and sprawls over six acres. It had 17 rooms when it was purchased in the late 1800's by Mrs. Sarah Winchester, widow of the Winchester rifle manufacturer. She had turned to spiritualism after her husband and only child died. She moved from Connecticut to California on the advice of a medium.

The medium also told Mrs. Winchester she would live forever if she kept building onto her home, never letting the work stop. The architect who had built the house was employed at first to oversee the work, but he soon quit in disgust. Then, for 36 years, the widow supervised a construction crew seven days a week.

She admitted no visitors except spirits and persons whose occupations put them beyond the vale. Her superstition

shows in the gold and silver chandeliers with 13 lights, ceilings with 13 panels, and rooms with 13 windows. Most of the 40 staircases, which go nowhere, have 13 steps. She thought her spirit friends liked variety, so most of the pillars are upside down.

But the unceasing construction failed to bring Mrs. Winchester eternal life. She died a half century ago. Her house was sold and became a tourist attraction. Today guides show visitors through acres of ghostly rooms. There are 2,000 doors, 12,000 windows, six kitchens.

Fellows, we all know that we must face death and that no man lives forever. How much better it would have been had Mrs. Winchester spent her life preparing her soul and not her house for eternity.

Ceremony: We are in a room here for our meeting. It's not spooky or mysterious. Jesus is here. Have you met Him? As we bow our heads, anyone wishing to meet Him please raise his hand.

A GUIDING LIGHT

Item needed: A flashlight.

Demonstration: Lights to be turned off and on by prearranged signal, to show the effectiveness of a light that shines as a beacon to our paths.

Story: There is a story of a man who was the keeper of the lighthouse at the entrance of the San Francisco Bay. The man had been faithful for years making sure that the lights were always on, guiding the ships at night whether it was clear or foggy.

San Francisco is known for its heavy, thick fog. One night about 11:00 o'clock the lights in the lighthouse went out. (Turn lights out.) The keeper was at the bottom of the long, winding staircase when the lights went out. He had climbed the staircase and lived in the lighthouse for many years, so he knew where everything was by memory. This time he had to find his way by feeling. The keeper remembered that a ship was due to sail into the harbor at 11:20 p.m., just twenty minutes away. Had the ship seen the light

go out? Or would the ship's captain believe there was still a great distance to sail, thinking that the light was not yet in sight?

The keeper couldn't take a chance. He had to get the lights on. Maybe there was a blown fuse, or just a "burned out" set of lights. As he replaced the complete set of fuses, he wondered, "What if it wasn't the fuses? Would he have time to replace the powerful lights before the ship crashed on the rocks below?"

The fuses were all replaced. Hurriedly, the keeper threw the switch. Nothing! A wave of panic and fear swept over him. He raced up the steps, three at a time. Could he make it in time? He had to try! Hurriedly, he unscrewed the old light bulbs. Then, frantically, he installed the new light bulbs. He sped down the long, twisting stairway. Would he make it in time?

As he landed on the final step, he raced for the switch box. He jammed the switch handle upward. (Turn lights on.) Lights! Beautiful, bright, brilliant lights filled the lighthouse. The big ship sailed past out of danger.

The Bible says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

If we read God's Word, it will become a strong, bright light that will keep us from crashing on the rocks of sin.

Ceremony: Fellows, let's repeat the pledge of allegiance to the Bible.

"I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word; I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway; and hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God."

STANDING THE TEST

Purpose: To teach boys the importance of putting God first.

Story: Mr. William Sunday, better known as "Billy" Sunday, was one of the greatest of our evangelists. Thousands of people were converted under his ministry. And largely through his labors, some American towns voted out the liquor traffic.

There came a time in Mr. Sunday's life when he had to make a great decision. He had been saved about three years, and during that time he had been a member of the famous Chicago baseball team.

He felt impressed that he ought to give himself up to some form of Christian work, but he was a poor speaker in those days. All the speaking he had done was to give his Christian testimony in a halting manner. He had two offers made to him. One was to sign an agreement to continue as a member of the Chicago baseball team for another year and to receive about \$500 a month as wages, or become an assistant at the Chicago YMCA at a pay of about \$100 a month—if he got *that!* He prayed over the matter.

He stood the test and accepted the humble position in which he could serve God.

In a wonderful manner God led him until he became a great evangelist. His whole future depended upon the choice he made. Think of the good that would have been left undone had he loved baseball more than he loved Christ, and had said no to God's call. But he said yes to God, and He has honored Billy Sunday. When Billy made the choice he had no idea how God was going to use him. He could not see into the future, but there are thousands today who have cause to thank God that Billy Sunday stood the test and made the right decision.

Ceremony: Fellows, the decisions you make from day to day may not seem too important, but they could shape your whole life. Let's pray today for the guidance of God in all our decisions.

HE WANTED TO BE FIRST

Purpose: To help boys see the importance of being a good follower as well as a leader.

Story: A missionary from Alaska was showing a picture of his dog team to some boys. He pointed to one dog and said, "This dog always led, but one day I decided it would be wise to train another dog to lead. Then, if anything happened to this one, I would not be without a leader. So I put the second-best dog ahead of the first.

"Can you imagine what happened? The first one dropped to the ground and would not move. I lifted him to his feet and forced him to go on. He gnawed the harness of the new leader until the dog was freed, and he was again the leader.

"He did this several times, so I had to take him out of the pack until the other dog was trained. The first leader sulked and grieved until he died of a broken heart. He wanted first place or none."

Some boys are like that. They want to be first—or nothing! But they are not following our great Leader, Jesus. He never fought for the first place. Instead, He said, "I am among you as he that serveth."

Ceremony: Fellows, have you been guilty of complaining and grumbling because you couldn't be a leader? Have you ever given your Patrol Guide a hard time because you wanted to be the leader instead of him? Unless you are a good follower you will never make a good leader. It is just as important to be a good follower as it is to be a good leader. How far do you think a halfback on a football team would get without the help of the rest of the team? Tonight we are going to ask our Senior Guide and our Patrol Guides to step inside our circle. Now, we are going to pray that God will help them to be good leaders. Let us pray that we will also be good followers.

THE COMPASS PLANT

There is an interesting bush found in the state of Texas called the compass plant. This perennial prairie flower grows from three to ten feet tall and has blossoms resembling those of the sunflower. It is unique in that all its leaves point north and south. Historians tell us that from this plant Indians were able to find their directions even at night.

While some have discounted the fact as an old fable, a careful scientist has discovered much truth in the tale. Both sides of the young leaves were found to be sensitive to light, thus standing edgewise to the earth and pointing

in two principal directions. The older leaves, however, which have become loaded with dust and dirt, lose their strength and may be found pointing in any direction.

What a lesson is here for every Royal Ranger! Each of us should be like the young leaves of the compass plant, always pointing to the Lord Jesus Christ. We must take care that we do not let sin come into our lives. For like the leaves that become covered with foreign particles and lose their usefulness, we too will fail in pointing others to the right way.

May we all follow the scriptural exhortation: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

Ceremony: Everyone stand, and let's raise our right hand toward heaven and repeat the Royal Rangers Pledge.

SOMETHING YOU CAN'T RUB OUT

Purpose: To show boys the damage words can do.

Story: "Don't write there," said a father to his son, who was writing with a diamond on the window.

"Why not?"

"Because you can't rub it out."

Did it ever occur to you that you are daily writing what you can't rub out? You made a cruel speech to your mother the other day. It wrote itself upon her loving heart and gave a pain. It is there now, and hurts her when she thinks of it. You can't rub it out.

You whispered a wicked thought one day in the ear of your playmate. It wrote itself on his mind, and led him to do a wicked act. It is there now. You can't rub it out.

All your thoughts, all your words, all your acts, are written in the book of memory. Be careful. The record is lasting. You can't rub it out.

Ceremony: Fellows, when we sin, if we ask God's forgiveness He will rub out our sins. However, many of the words we have said and deeds we have done will leave their scar on the hearts of those we have hurt. We should be very careful about what we say and what we do. The

Royal Rangers pledge states, "With God's help I will do my best to . . . make the Golden Rule my daily rule." If we will live by the Golden Rule and treat others as we want them to treat us, we will not regret things we cannot rub out.

Let's join hands and repeat the Golden Rule. Then let us pray for strength to live by it.

OBJECT LESSON: SALT

Items needed: Miniature salt boxes.

Scripture: Matthew 5:13.

Story: In the state of Utah there is a large body of water called the Great Salt Lake. It is surrounded by an even larger area known as the Great Salt Lake Desert. There are miles upon miles of salt, making it the largest concentration of this mineral in North America. Mines have been established, and the salt is taken from the ground and purified for our use.

The Bible says that we are the "salt of the earth." But if we lose our saltiness, we are henceforth good for nothing.

Salt creates *thirst*. How many like ham sandwiches? Everyone does! Ham is usually salty and we find ourselves drinking more liquid afterwards. As the salt of the earth, we create in others a desire for the water of life.

Salt adds *flavor*. Did you ever try to eat vegetables without any salt on them? They usually taste flat. Salt perks up the flavor and even makes things like spinach taste better. God put us here as salt. We flavor the world by serving Him in our daily lives. In this, we have to be different from the rest of the world in that we put Jesus first in everything.

Salt *preserves*. Did you ever eat salt pickles? Salt pork? Salt fish? Did you ever wonder what keeps them from spoiling? Salt! We have a message for the world, that Jesus died for their sins. The message must be preserved in the "salt of the earth."

Salt *cleanses*. It purifies and makes life better for us all. We can be a cleansing influence on the world, pointing people to Jesus, the Saviour of all mankind.

Ceremony: (Open a box of salt and pour some in your hand. Show to the boys.) Fellows, God wants us all to be spiritual salt in this world. If it is your desire to be ever among the salt of the earth, then gather round me here in front as we have a closing prayer together.

BE LIKE AN EAGLE

Purpose: To show boys the importance of being free from the chains of sin.

Story: Years ago in a little town in the Rocky Mountains a crowd gathered outside a store window. On the inside was a large American eagle, with a chain fastened to one of his feet and hooked to a ring in the floor.

Held captive for some weeks, the eagle became indifferent to the crowd that looked at him in the window.

Through the crowd one day a tall young mountaineer suddenly and silently pushed his way. He entered the store and asked the proprietor, "How much for the bird?"

"Four dollars," was the reply.

The young man took out four dollars, gave it to the storekeeper, and walked over to take the eagle. The bird was no longer afraid of people. The mountaineer unfastened the chain and carried the eagle down the street as the crowd followed. On the edge of town he placed the eagle on the top of a sign, in full view of the mountains. Instead of flying, the bird stood still. The eagle had been earth-bound so long that he didn't seem to care about flying.

But then he raised his head and noticed the sun high up above the mountain. The bird seemed to remember that he was an eagle, and that his home was high up in the cliffs. A feeling of freedom surged through him. The eagle lifted his powerful wings and, with a shriek, soared away, winging higher toward the sun.

The young mountaineer, with his gaze fixed on the eagle, said, "I used to see that bird up there in the mountain when I tended sheep. When I saw it chained in that store, I couldn't stand it. Eagles belong higher up. He wasn't made to be chained in a place like this."

Ceremony: Fellows, when a person is living in sin, he is chained like that eagle. This is not God's will for our lives. He wants us to be free from sin by accepting His Son, Jesus. Then we too can be lifted up to the heights of joy and peace. Please note: If you have unsaved boys, give them an opportunity to accept Christ.

TAKING A STAND

Purpose: To encourage the boys to take a stand for Christ.

Item needed: A piece of chalk.

Story: Many stories are told about the famous battle of the Alamo in Texas. One concerns the evening when Colonel Travis, the commander of the group at the Alamo, called all his men together. Drawing his saber, he drew a line across the dirt floor of the Alamo.

"Men," he stated solemnly, "after tonight there will be no escape for us. All who are willing to stay and die for freedom, step across this line."

All the men except one crossed the line. Even Jim Bowie, who was in bed seriously ill, cried, "Somebody carry my bed across the line. I may not be able to fight much, but I want to be on the right side."

Later the battle cry, "Remember the Alamo," was used by Texans as they fought and won their freedom. It was inspired by the courage and sacrifice of these men.

Fellows, it takes a real he-man to take a stand for Christ. Anyone can drift with the crowd. Most of our great men have been individuals who have dared to be different. Are you willing to take a stand and be different for Christ?

Ceremony: Fellows, I'm going to draw a line across the floor with this piece of chalk. I want all of you who are willing to take a stand as Christians, and live as Christ wants you to live, to step across this line. Some of you may already be Christians; others may not be Christians as yet. However, I want all of you to cross the line and take your stand for right. Now, let's all pray that God will give us power to stand true to what we know is right.

Note to Commander: Unsaved boys who cross the line should be dealt with personally about salvation.

SCATTERED FEATHERS

Purpose: To show the boys the results of angry and hasty words.

Story: A king once held a great banquet for all his knights who had returned from war. The day before the feast, the chief knight fell from his horse and was seriously hurt. The king was surprised on the night of the banquet to find the men all happy and gay. He had thought the knight's accident would make them sad. When he asked why they were so happy, he found that the men disliked the knight. He was always criticizing someone; he never said a kind word.

When the knight recovered, the king asked him to find a bag of feathers and go for a horseback ride with him. Although the knight thought it strange, he did as he was commanded. When they came to a crossroad, the king told him to empty the bag. Then they returned home. The next day the king asked the knight to bring the empty bag and ride out again.

Imagine the knight's surprise when, as they arrived at the same crossroad, the king asked him to gather the feathers! Of course, it couldn't be done.

Words are like these scattered feathers. What about the angry and hasty words that hurt your friends or parents? You did not think before you said them, but you can never get them back. If our words are always words of impatience and anger, others will see what we are like inside.

What does God's Word say about angry and hasty words? First, it states "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Then it states, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," and "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life." These are only a few portions of Scripture that deal with this subject.

We all know that we cannot rid our lives of these angry

and hasty words by ourselves. It is very easy to speak without thinking. We must ask God to help us to speak only good words.

Ceremony: Now, everyone stand and shake hands with at least three people and say something good about them. (Your shoes are shined well, you did a good job of tent-pitching at the last camp-out, etc.)

KNOWING THE TRAIL

Items needed: A compass, a map, a New Testament or small Bible.

I. COMPASS

A. A must for every outdoor person.

1. Soldiers.
2. Hunters, fishermen, campers.
3. Royal Rangers too.

B. To have this instrument and know how to use it could save time, money, pain, headaches, perhaps a life too!

II. MAP

A. Every traveler must have a map.

1. Shows the traveler the best route to take.
2. May indicate shortcuts or detours or road conditions.

B. The traveler doesn't just go in any direction—just wherever there is a road.

1. He has a destination.
2. He has a plan how to arrive at that destination.

III. NEW TESTAMENT OR BIBLE

A. We are all travelers or campers or hunters, fishermen or woodsmen or soldiers (spiritually).

1. Life has set us on a journey in a strange place. We haven't been this way before (Joshua 3:4).
2. And we will never be able to go here again, never to do it over again. We need help and direction.

B. Where do we find it?

1. How to be saved.

2. How to live.
3. The promise of Jesus' taking me home after this life.

Ceremony: Lay the compass and folded map on the open New Testament. Have the fellows gather round for prayer.

STAYING CLOSE TO THE MASTER RANGER

Items needed: Several kitchen matches, a nail, a length of string or cord.

Fellows, you have all seen a match like this before, haven't you? (Hold up a match.) You know how easily it can be broken? (Break this match in half, and let a couple of the boys break a match to stress the point.)

Now, fellows, look at this nail. It would be very hard to break it wouldn't it? Now let's put a match side-by-side with the nail and wrap this string around both of them and tie the ends.

Now, let's see if the match can be broken. (Attempt to break it.) Well, I can't seem to do it. Maybe some of you boys can. (Pass it around to several of them—if the match is joined securely to the nail and wrapped tightly, it cannot be broken.)

Fellows, the match represents each of us, and the nail represents the Master Ranger (the Lord Jesus Christ). Perhaps you can already see a great truth illustrated here. By ourselves we can easily be broken by Satan. But when we completely unite or tie ourselves to Christ, there is nothing that can break us or make us fall.

Ceremony: Just as we are united to Christ, through Him we are united one to another. Everyone come up front and let's make a giant stack of hands to symbolize our unity in the Lord. (Chorus: "When We All Pull Together.")

A STAR TO FOLLOW

Items needed: Four large paper stars (readable at 15 feet): First star with photo of movie star printed on it;

second star with photo of some world ruler on it; third star with photo of the richest man in the world on it; fourth star larger than the rest with picture of Jesus on it. A strong flashlight or spotlight.

Note: In speaking about each star, give any personal anecdotes you wish.

1. Direct boys' attention to the stars overhead and talk about the North Star, which is used as a direction finder or guide for people all over the earth. Emphasize that each person needs a guide or light to follow.

2. Shine light on the first star. Point out that many people use movie stars as their guide. They pattern their lives after these people both in actions and dress. The popularity these people gain does not satisfy. Many of the movie stars wreck their lives by the use of drugs and alcohol, and quite a few of them try to commit suicide. Entitle this "The Star of Personal Glory and Prestige." This is not a star to follow.

3. Shine light on the second star. State that many people would like to be a great ruler. They try to gain prestige by achieving certain positions in life; they hope this will satisfy. But when these positions are gained, they still are unhappy. Read Matthew 20:20-23 and point out that "The Star of Personal Ambition" will not satisfy.

4. Shine light on the third star. Explain that this is "The Star of Riches." Tell the story of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus in Luke 18:18-24; also Luke 16:19-31. Emphasize that riches will never satisfy. Quote Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

5. Stress the point that the stars they have just seen are not the stars to follow; man needs a greater star to follow. He needs a light to guide his pathway. Revelation 22:16 tells us of One who is called the "Bright and Morning Star." That Star is Jesus. (Shine the light on the fourth star.) The brightest light in all the sky is the "Morning Star," and if we follow Jesus, our Morning Star, we will never lose our way.

6. Turn the light on the stars one by one and explain

again that they will not satisfy, but that when we follow Jesus there is satisfaction and eternal life.

Ceremony: Give each boy a chance to accept the Lord Jesus Christ or rededicate his life while the light remains on the picture of Jesus.

TALENTS

God has blessed each of us with many abilities and talents. Sometimes these remain hidden, and therefore are wasted simply because the person so blessed lacks ambition or diligence to find, develop, and use such abilities and talents.

In the spring of 1848, Kit Carson, the great American hunter and scout, was bearing dispatches from Monterey, California, to Washington, D.C. Upon reaching Santa Fe, he was greeted by the disappointing news that the politicians at Washington had refused to appoint him as a lieutenant in the Rifle Corps. His faithful and indignant friends urged him to quit the perilous work as courier, but Kit Carson staunchly replied, in the face of keen disappointment, "No, the big thing is to do the job." To him the important thing was to complete his designated work to the best of his ability. The big thing always is to complete the job, and doing it necessitates work. No talent or ability was ever discovered or developed without hours of sincere, conscientious work. Always give God your best and do the job He has given you to do.

Ceremony: Fellows, each of you has an opportunity to do something for God. And there's no limit to what you can do for Him so long as you do it for *His* glory. Let's close by praising the Lord for the opportunity He has given us as Royal Rangers.

THE STAR THAT WOULDN'T SHINE

This is an ancient legend about the star that wouldn't shine. The star's name was Ormand. According to the

legend, Ormand was an ordinary star in the sky and had been in his proper place for many years; but one day Ormand decided to stop shining.

After some investigation, it was discovered that this particular star had begun to realize that he was not the brightest star in the sky. There were several stars that twinkled a bit brighter and could be seen a bit farther. So Ormand turned off his light—he would show them! Soon, he would be begged to shine again. He would be missed so badly that he would be given the most important place in the sky.

Ormand sulked and waited with his turned-off light, but nobody came to him. Nobody even seemed to miss him! In fact, one day he found that he had been moved to the farthest corner of the sky where the lesser things of the sky were kept.

At first Ormand was very angry, but gradually he began to realize something he had never noticed before. He discovered that each star had its own place to shine; and that although some were brighter, it didn't make any difference because each one had his own job to do.

For the first time, too, this brooding star realized that there were other stars that had less light than he did. Maybe he had been too busy thinking about what he didn't have instead of realizing what a lot he did have!

The more Ormand thought about it and how important it was to do his best, the more the light inside him began to glow. Suddenly, Ormand began to shine again. Soon he was back in his regular place; but this time he shone even more brightly than before, because now he was happy to be able to do his best, regardless of what others around him were doing.

This is just a story; but sometimes there are real Ormands in Royal Rangers. There are fellows who won't do their best because they feel that somebody else is a bigger "star." Or maybe they don't feel good enough to do a job.

Don't let your light go out! Remember that your job, your testimony, your life, are important. Keep doing your best and don't worry about comparing your job with those of others. You'll not only find yourself having a good

time, but you will see your light will glow brightly as well.
“Let your light so shine . . .” (Matthew 5:16).

Ceremony: Everyone who wants to shine for Jesus come up front and stand before me as we have prayer together.

GETTING RID OF SIN

Every boy comes with his pen or pencil and Bible. Each sits around the campfire which is already burning. The Commander passes one sheet of paper to each Ranger. The Commander explains, “We may have habits that are sinful which bother us, and we would like to get rid of them. I would like to invite each of you Rangers to write down on the sheet of paper the bad habits you want to get rid of.” The Commander then asks all Rangers to read in their Bible 1 John 1:9. When the Rangers have finished listing their sins, they wad up the paper, walk to the fire, and drop their paper in. As each Ranger watches his paper burn he says aloud and slowly, “Lord God of fire, burn these sins and let me not see them anymore.” He then walks back to his seat. At this point the Commander reads Romans 10:13, and unsaved boys are invited to accept Christ.

Ceremony: Every Ranger stands and places his hands upon the boy that is facing him, and each prays that God will use him in His plan.

PRAIRIE FIRE

Purpose: To help boys understand how much Christ really loves them.

Story: It was a beautiful autumn day in North Dakota. The trees loomed high in the sky and the grass covered the ground like a beautiful blanket. The prairie stretched for miles in every direction, with rolling hills all around.

Suddenly this beautiful landscape was marred by a smoke-filled sky. Soon the prairie and hills were a mass of devouring flames. The air was hot and difficult to breathe. An eerie sound like a roaring freight train filled the air as

the prairie fire raced across the plains. Walking across the prairie the next day, I discovered a prairie hen, charred and dead, sitting on her nest. I kicked over the charred body of the hen and to my surprise several little chicks ran out. The mother had protected them with her body during the fury of the prairie fire. God had given this mother bird the instinct to preserve her young. She died so that her chicks might live.

Ceremony: Fellows, Jesus also died a horrible, sacrificial death that we might have life. The mother hen died so that her little ones might continue to live. Jesus died so that you and I might live for eternity. How great and wonderful was His love for us!

Let us pray that we will always show our gratitude for this love.

THE STORY OF JOHN HOLDEN

A ship was wrecked off the coast of England in the days before there were airplanes and modern ways of rescuing those stranded at sea. Those men needed rescuing too.

A lifeboat was launched and the crew set out to sea. Darkness came on, but the people on the coast lit fires so the sailors might be guided to shore by the flames. After a while, those on the shore saw the lifeboat returning. When it reached the shore, it was learned that one man had been left clinging to the mast of the wrecked ship.

"Why did you not save him?" asked a man by the name of Holden.

"We were exhausted," said the captain. "We thought it better to try to get here with ourselves and those we have rescued. We would all have perished if we had remained another five minutes trying to save one man."

"But will you go back?"

"No," he answered. The storm was too severe and they were too weak.

Holden threw himself on the beach and prayed that God would put it into the hearts of some of the men to go and rescue the one man. When he had finished praying,

six men gathered around and volunteered to go with him.

As they were ready to start, John Holden's mother came down and threw her arms around his neck.

"John, you must not go," she said. "You know your father was drowned at sea, and it has been just two years since your brother William left. We have never heard a word from him since. What will I do if you perish?"

"Mother," he said, "God has put it on my heart to go, and if I perish, He will take care of you."

Away he went, determined to rescue the man who had been left to perish at sea. When the man was safe in the boat, John discovered it was his older brother William.

John Holden endured the fierce storm to rescue a man from physical death. Our lesson today is the story of one who suffered far more than the wrath of the stormy elements to rescue us from spiritual death. He died so we might receive eternal life and be free from the guilt and power of our sins. He gave His life so we might be free from all bondage of Satan.

Ceremony: Let's stand and sing the chorus, "Thank You Lord for Saving My Soul."

HAMMER

Item needed: An ordinary claw hammer.

Fellows, we shall consider some very important facts about the hammer.

First, it keeps its head, for without it the hammer is useless. Your head is not only a place to wear a Ranger cap; it's also to think with.

Second, it doesn't fly off the handle. The hammer is unruffled by a stubborn nail. And we must remember that the person who gets mad always loses.

Third, it keeps pounding away. A nail cannot be driven into a board with one lick. Neither should we become discouraged by a difficult task.

Fourth, it finds the point then drives it home. The hammer works with one nail at a time, completing the job before going to another. As a Royal Ranger, set your goals

high, then resolve that you will not be sidetracked.

Fifth, it makes mistakes, but starts over again. The claws are for removing a bent nail so another can be driven. We are all subject to mistakes, but the one who wins in life tries again.

Sixth, it doesn't try to be something else. The hammer can never take the place of a saw or any other tool. We each have a place to fill in God's plan. We must not try to be something different.

Finally, it's the only knocker in the world that does any good. It pounds loudly, but only to be constructive. We should beware lest we destroy something good by critical remarks.

Ceremony: (Give the hammer to a volunteer to stand before the group.) Now, fellows, let's repeat the Royal Rangers Pledge.

A HUNTING TRIP

Scripture: John 21:6.

Did you ever go hunting? I don't mean hunting with guns for animals—that is one kind of hunting. I have known people to go hunting for berries, nuts, and eggs; little girls that go hunting for four-leaf clovers and flowers; boys who go bug and butterfly hunting; and older folks who hunt for education, wealth, and prestige.

Why do people go hunting? I believe they go because there is something they want and they are willing to work to get it.

What about those people who never hunt? Isn't there anything they want? Maybe there is, but perhaps they are just too lazy to go after it. Do you know what I have seen some of these lazy folks do? They find fault with other folks because they have things that they don't have. They say the hunters have all the luck when it wasn't luck at all; it was because they were willing to go after the thing they wanted.

I have noticed that out in the world many of the most valuable things are hidden and must be hunted for, such

as gold, silver, platinum, and diamonds. I have also observed that many of the other things we want in life, like happiness, success, and friends, need to be hunted for—need to be worked for. If we are not willing to do that, then we must be fair and not be envious of others when they have searched for and found success and happiness.

Ceremony: What do you want out of life? How hard are you willing to work to get it? Let's pray to God; He knows what is best, and will show us where and how to find the best.

PEBBLES OF THE SEA

I wonder whether any of you boys have ever been to Pebble Beach in California? If you ever visited there, I feel sure that somewhere in your possession there are a few pebbles which are quite smooth and attractive in color, but a little disappointing because they are not as lovely as when you first saw them gleaming in the shallow water.

Someone tells of a boy who was walking along the shore at Pebble Beach and happened to meet an old man who was well known in the neighborhood for his quaint and wise remarks. He was called "The Philosopher." The boy and the old man looked together at the beautiful pebbles bathed by the sea, glinting white and red and green. The boy picked one up and held it tightly in his hand. Presently the philosopher said, "Show me the pebble again." The boy did, but now it was not beautiful, but dull and dry. "Put it back where the waters of the ocean can roll over it again," said the philosopher. The boy did, and the pebble was again shining and beautiful.

So it is with our lives. Apart from God, like pebbles out of the sea, our lives are drab and dull. But if we live our lives so that God's love and forgiveness constantly bathe us, we may shine with a new light and have a kind of loveliness instead of ugliness, both in spirit and in life.

Ceremony: Have you once known God's love but wandered away? As we bow our heads in prayer, ask Him to plunge you beneath the sea of His forgiveness.

THE GREATEST ESCAPE ARTIST

Purpose: So that the boys will know that Jesus is the Greatest!

Story: I'm sure most of you boys have heard about the world's greatest escape artist, Harry Houdini. He was born in 1874 and died in 1926.

Houdini specialized in escaping from handcuffs, strait-jackets, and leg-irons. To publicize his act, he would allow himself to be handcuffed and locked in the town's most escape-proof jail cell. In a few moments he would release himself.

He would hang upside down far above the street and release himself from a straitjacket. Such death-defying acts made him world famous. His most spectacular feat was to have himself handcuffed, chained, and placed in a large wooden crate. The cover was nailed on, ropes and chains were wrapped around it, and the crate was thrown off a pier into deep water. In a few seconds Houdini came swimming to the surface.

Ceremony: Fellows, the world claims that Houdini was the world's greatest escape artist. No doubt he was a great escape artist, but how sad it is the world fails to recognize the world's GREATEST escape artist by the name of Jesus Christ. The Bible clearly states that Jesus, having *died* on the cross, being buried, arose again on the third day. He conquered death and the grave, and He promises us that the same victory is ours if we will only believe in Him and receive Him in our hearts. Let's bow our heads and ask Him into your hearts right now. (Follow with a short prayer.)

THE LAST PITCH

This is a true story about one of the greatest big league baseball players of all time, Lou Gehrig, who played for the New York Yankees. One thing about Lou Gehrig that made him different from all other players was the fact that he would never talk while at the plate.

New York was tied with the Boston Red Sox for first

place in the American League. It was in the ninth inning, and two men were out. New York needed to win this game to win the pennant. The Yankees had one man on second base when Lou Gehrig stepped up to bat. The enormous crowd was very still. The pitcher trembled, for he knew if he could fan Gehrig, the game would be over. He carefully wound up and threw the ball.

"Strike one," the umpire yelled. The pitcher began to sweat as he looked at Gehrig, who was the most feared long ball hitter in the league.

Lou swung at the next pitch, and missed. It looked like Gehrig was going for the big one. The crowd rose to its feet. Both teams were on the edges of their dugouts. The pitcher wound up very slowly and carefully. The pitch was a fast ball right down the middle where Lou liked them, but he stood and watched it go right over the plate.

"Strike three! You're out!" yelled the umpire. Lou Gehrig turned and said something to the umpire. The newspaper reporters flocked out onto the field, for they knew that Lou Gehrig never said anything to the umpires. They wanted to know what he had said.

"Tell us, what did Lou Gehrig say to you?" The umpire turned and said, "Lou Gehrig simply said, 'I'd give five dollars for that last pitch.'"

Fellows, there are many people in hell today that would give anything for one more chance to make their heart right with God. If you have not accepted Him, do it today.

Ceremony: All of you will one day look at that "last pitch." It may be soon; it may be in a long time. If you wish to make things right with God before that time, stand up and let's pray.

SPIRITUAL COMPASSES

Purpose: To demonstrate the need of being faithful to Christ.

Items needed: A compass and a pinwheel.

Story: Sitting around this campfire reminds me of another fire in Mark 14. Like our fire, this was a nighttime

fire being used to keep warm. Around this fire we find many different people, but one man interests us. This man is Peter. Christ is on His way to be crucified, and Peter is fearful for his own life. Upon being confronted as being a friend of Christ, Peter denies that he knows Jesus and even goes so far as to curse and swear.

One day not long after this, something happened to Peter that made him a different man. He was filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and became bold and fearless in proclaiming Christ. In fact, he preached the first sermon about Christ.

Discussion: What is this object? (Hold up pinwheel.) That's right, it's a child's pinwheel. Often you will see children holding one out of the car window to make it spin in the breeze. Notice how it spins when I blow on it. Now Fred, you blow on it. And you, Commander Smith. Notice how it spins no matter who blows on it. What kind of Christian does this represent? Those who are easily swayed, crowd followers, etc. This represents that period in Peter's life before Pentecost.

Now observe this object. (Show compass.) Why does a compass show us direction? It always points north. What happens when I blow on it? Nothing. Suppose I turn it around? The needle still points north. What type of Christian does this represent? One who always points to Christ.

Ceremony: Let us all stand around this fire and look at the North Star. The North Star represents Christ. Let us pray that we may always live in such a way that we might point others to Christ.

THE BOY WHO SAID NO

Purpose: To help boys see the importance of truthfulness.

Items needed: If possible, a set of Clarke's Commentary on the Bible. Also a whittling stick and a pocketknife.

Story: Many years ago a red-haired boy worked in a linen factory. One day an order came in for 90 yards of linen. The superintendent measured a bolt, but found it three yards short. He decided to wet the linen and

stretch it. He took hold of one end and called to the red-haired boy to take hold of the other end and pull. The boy refused, saying he would not help make the linen lie. He was discharged then and there. "You're stupid," the boss told him. "You'll never make a linen manufacturer."

He didn't. But that red-haired boy who refused to help make the linen lie, thereby laid a stone in a good, solid foundation for his future. Later he became the great Bible commentator whom the world knows as Adam Clarke. He had achieved success far greater than if he had become a wealthy, but dishonest, linen manufacturer!

Ceremony: Fellows, one of the worst things a boy can do is to tell a lie. On the other hand, one of the greatest things a boy can do is to refuse to tell a lie. Every time we refuse to tell a lie or refuse to take part in a lie, we make our character a little stronger. Clarke—the man who wouldn't tell a lie when he was a boy—wrote a six-volume Bible commentary (if possible show the boys a copy of the commentary) that has been a blessing and guidance to thousands of people. Wouldn't each of you like to be that kind of boy? Here is a stick; I want each of you to make this pledge, "With God's help I will not be a liar." Then, I want you to cut a notch in the stick in our meeting room to remind us of our pledge.

STOPPED WATCHES

Item needed: A watch of any kind that has stopped.

Purpose: To show that a Christian needs to read his Bible continually (1 Peter 2:2).

Here is a watch; and it's a very good watch, but I have to do something to it every day. Yes, I have to wind it, and I have to do so every day if I want my watch to keep running.

We're going to let this watch represent every Christian; and what is accomplished by winding the watch is accomplished in the Christian life by reading the Bible and praying each day. Just as the watch needs winding every day, so do we need to read the Bible and pray each day.

If I forget to read the Bible and pray every day I stop growing in the Lord. You can see the watch has stopped, so it is no good to me, is it? Just so a Christian who has stopped growing is not much help to the Lord.

Perhaps some of you have been stopped, maybe for a long time. What are you going to do about it? If I want this watch to start again, what do I need to do? Simply wind it, of course. And that's all you have to do if you want to start advancing for the Lord Jesus again—simply start reading the Bible and praying regularly again. Let's be faithful in this important matter.

Ceremony: Those of you owning watches please stand and wind them. This is what we all should do in a spiritual sense. Now, let's all stand and together ask our Lord to keep us running.

ID RATHER HAVE A BIBLE

Purpose: To encourage boys to read the Bible more.

Items needed: A Bible and a road map.

Story: There was a boy who wanted a Bible very much indeed. He wanted it more than anything else he could think of. But he was a poor boy and could not afford to buy one, because he lived a good many years ago when Bibles cost more than they do now.

One day two strange gentlemen came to his house and asked his mother for something to eat. Although she had only plain food she made them welcome to what she had. As they ate, they saw that the boy looked sad. They asked him what he wanted, and he told them that he wanted a Bible.

His mother said, "Never mind. Don't fret about that. I'll take you to see General Washington next week."

"But I'd rather have a Bible than go to see General Washington," the boy said.

One of the gentlemen seemed much pleased with this and told him he hoped he would always be so fond of the Bible.

The next day the boy received a beautiful Bible, on the

flyleaf of which was written, "From George Washington."

The boy did not know it, but he had been talking to George Washington on the day before. Do you value the Word of God—and read it often?

Ceremony: Fellows, in my hands I hold a Bible and a road map. People who make trips or journeys find a road map invaluable because it will guide them to their destination. The greatest road map of all times is the Bible. It will guide man on his journey through life. It can be a wonderful guide for your life. We should consult it often so that we may know we are on the right road.

Let's gather around the table and lay our hands on the Bible. Then let's pray together, "Lord, I will do my best to follow the instructions in Your Word as the guide for my life."

THE DEVIL'S BEST TOOL

Purpose: To encourage boys to be faithful in their duties and responsibilities.

Story: There is an old fable about how the devil once offered his tools for sale. He displayed them all—malice, jealousy, hatred, deceit, and several others, with the prices marked on them. One of the tools was laid apart with a higher price than the others. When the devil was asked, according to the fable, why this was, he said, "Because this is my most useful tool; it is called discouragement; with that I can do anything with people."

Most folks know all too well what discouragement is and what it does. Various things bring on an attack. Maybe yours comes when you find that it is hard to be a Christian at times, especially if you are the only Christian in your family or your school. Or maybe your times of discouragement come when you find difficult tasks piling up one on top of another. Suddenly you find yourself thinking, "Oh, what's the use anyway?" That's the devil, or one of his imps, using the tool marked "discouragement." Better be on guard!

Ceremony: Fellows, discouragement is a dangerous thing,

and since it has so many harmful results we need to ask the Lord's help against it. He wants us to remember that He is our Helper. I want us all to stand and repeat together three times, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). Now, let's pray for His help to overcome discouragement.

HE REFUSED HELP

Purpose: To emphasize how God loves us and wants to help us.

Story: The house of an elderly man was burning. A neighbor rushed into the house to rescue the old gentleman. He found the man tearing up the mattress of his bed and pulling out money he had hidden there. "Quick," cried the neighbor, "we must get outside immediately." "No! No!" screamed the old man. "I can't leave without my money." Tugging at the older man's arm, the neighbor shouted, "We must leave now; the roof is starting to fall." "Leave me alone," raved the old man, "I can't leave now." A falling beam separated them, and the neighbor never saw the old man alive again. As the house became engulfed in flames, he sobbed, "He wouldn't let me help him."

God must feel this way when sinners perish. If a man goes to hell, it is because he will not let Jesus help him.

God wants to save every man and woman, boy and girl. But each person must accept Jesus' work of salvation. Will you let Jesus help you?

Ceremony: Fellows, instead of refusing God's help we should be asking for it. Man has many ways of signaling that he needs help. For example, three gunshots, three campfires at night, three blasts of a whistle, are all distress signals. Can you fellows name other distress signals? Now, fellows, who can tell us how we let God know we need His help? (Have a brief discussion.)

Those of you who need God's help in some way and would be willing to accept His help, please raise your hands. Now let's all pray that God will help us and our friends here in the outpost.

KEY TO HEAVEN

Purpose: To show that there is only one key that unlocks the door to heaven.

Items needed: One lock and key and five other keys that do not fit the lock. The key that fits should be painted red. All the other keys should be painted another color.

Boys, here is a lock and six keys. We want to find out how we can go to heaven. We will let the lock represent heaven. Let us see if we can find a key that will open the lock or open the door of heaven.

1. Here is a key that is marked "Good." Can we get to heaven by being good? (Try the key and see if it will open the lock.) No, this key will not open the lock; therefore we cannot get into heaven by just being good.

2. We have another key here marked "Obedience." The fifth commandment says, "Honor thy father and thy mother." This means also to obey them. We should also obey our leaders and all in authority. Can we go to heaven by being obedient only? Let's try the key marked Obedience and see if it will open the lock. No, this key will not open the lock either. We cannot get to heaven by just being obedient.

3. Here is a key that is marked "Good Works." Do you think we can get to heaven by doing good works? We will try the key and see if it will open the lock. No, this key will not open the lock. Good works is not the key that opens the door to heaven.

4. This key is marked "Reading your Bible." This may be the key that will unlock the door to heaven. Let's try this one. Do you think we can go to heaven by just reading the Bible? This key doesn't open the lock either. No, we cannot just read our Bible and expect to go to heaven, although this may help us and is a very good habit.

5. The next key is marked "Prayer." Prayer is wonderful and we all should pray. Let's find out if prayer is the key to going to heaven. What do you think about it? This key will not even fit into the lock. Prayer, alone, is not the key that opens the door to heaven, although it is of great help to us.

6. Here is the last key and it is painted red. This key is marked "Jesus Christ." This key fits the lock very well. As you can see, it is the only one that also *opens* the lock. Now we find that Jesus Christ is the key that unlocks the door to heaven. The Bible says in Acts 4:12, "... for there is none other name under heaven... whereby we must be saved." We know we *must* if we are to get to heaven.

Do you know why this key is red? The red stands for the blood of Jesus Christ which He shed on the cross that we might have forgiveness of our sins.

Ceremony: (Separate the red key from the others and lay it on an open Bible.) Fellows, Jesus is knocking at your heart's door. But the latch is on the inside. If you'll open unto Him, He'll give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Let us pray.

INVESTING YOUR LIFE

Purpose: To help boys see the importance of yielding their lives to Christ.

Items needed: A piece of paper for each boy with the words, "I'll invest my life for God" written on it.

Story: It is said that five dollars' worth of raw steel, when taken into a watch factory and made into hairsprings, becomes worth many thousands of dollars. This same steel may be made into knives, or a number of other things, but no one of them will be worth as much as the springs.

In every piece of steel there is locked up the possibility of hairsprings. The steel may go to make something else worth less, but all the time it has the possibility of being greatly increased in value.

The life of every young person is like that piece of steel. You may not appear worth much to the world now, but your value is not altogether in what you are now, but what you may become.

How can you make your life reach its highest value? By investing it in the place where the greatest and highest use of it can be made. There is only one such place and

that is in serving God. The life that is devoted to God's service always brings out its greatest possibilities and increases its value to the highest degree.

Ceremony: Fellows, the greatest investment you can ever make is to invest your life for Christ. He can take your life and really make it worth something. We are going to give each of you a slip of paper that contains the pledge "I'll invest my life for God." We want you to sign this pledge and then we will pray for God's help in keeping yielded to His will for our lives.

CONSERVE

Purpose: To help build stronger Christians.

Stories and Ceremony (together): Fellows, what does "conserve" mean? Conserve means "to keep in a safe state." Is your Christian life "in a safe state"? The blackness of sin is washed from our lives by the blood of Christ. Let's conserve these shiny new lives by proper use of them (1 Timothy 4:10-12).

Conserve through Bible Study (1 Timothy 4:13-16; 2 Timothy 2:15). It was a dark day when the reading of the Bible was not permitted! When one woman heard the soldiers coming to search her home, she wrapped her Bible in bread dough and put it into the oven. The best place to hide God's word is in your heart!

Conserve through Prayer (2 Timothy 1:1-5). Prayer is the key that opens the door to victorious living. No physical handicap or moral failure is so great that it cannot be met and conquered through prayer. "The flame of prayer is fed by the fuel of meditation. Think how God prayed, and you will soon pray like Him."

Conserve through Church Attendance (1 Timothy 4:12-16). School attendance is required; employers demand faithful attendance in the business world; but what about church attendance? Meeting together in worship is a means of strengthening and conserving faith. Are you using the privilege or abusing it?

Conserve through Remembrance (1 Timothy 2:1-6). If

you had been kidnapped and someone paid your ransom, how would you feel? Would you forget that person? Jesus saw mankind in the bondage of sin and paid the ransom for all of us. Can we ever forget Him? In the Lord's Supper we reconsecrate ourselves to godliness.

Conserve through Giving (1 Timothy 6:17, 18; 2 Corinthians 9:7). A water pump sometimes becomes dry, stopping the flow of water. Pour some water into it and the cracks fill up, the valves swell, and water comes pouring out. Christianity is like that. We must put something into it if we expect to receive blessings from it. GIVE of your time, talent, and money!

Conserve by Seeking the Lost (1 Timothy 2:20-26). In the London docks, life hooks are ready at all times for use in the rescue of a drowning person. To tamper with them is to subject oneself to a heavy penalty. Take a lesson from the Life Hook! Our lives should be instruments, ready for the Master's use in saving lost souls. Be "READY."

Ceremony: Pray for a deeper walk for all our Royal Rangers.

DANGER

Purpose: To emphasize the danger of looking at, or reading, the wrong thing.

Story: "Danger! Do Not Look!" are the words stamped on the casing of the acetylene torches that workmen on street railways use for welding the iron rails together. The flame of these torches is so intensely brilliant that unprotected eyes may be seriously injured by even a momentary glance at it.

What a fine thing it would be if these words could be stamped upon other things than acetylene torches. They might be placed across the pages of the cheap books that are daily flooding the market; or above the doorways of certain places of entertainment; or even placed along our city streets and roadways where glaring posters seek to lure the mind to unworthy thoughts.

"I always turn my face in another direction when I pass

that newsstand," said a fine Christian boy to his companion. "I know my weakness and I find I am all the better for not letting my gaze rest upon the cheap magazines that are always on display."

Ceremony: Fellows, there are three things that strongly determine what we think; they are: what we see, what we read, what we hear. The Bible says, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). Therefore, in a sense, these things determine what we are. The Royal Rangers Code states, "A Ranger is clean." He is clean in body, mind, and speech. As Royal Rangers we should be very careful regarding what we look upon, the books and magazines we read, the TV programs we watch, etc.

Now let's form a friendship circle and pray for God to help us to look at the right things and to keep a clean mind.

LEECHES

Purpose: To emphasize the fact that only Jesus can cleanse and remove our sins.

Story: There was a man who was going through a river in a foreign land. When he came out of the river he found that many leeches were clinging to him. They had fastened on him while he was in the river.

Leeches are little water creatures that fasten themselves to animals or man by suction.

He started to knock them off.

"Don't do that!" exclaimed his attendant. "You'll only make them stick harder. I will prepare you a bath that will bring them all off." He then prepared a medicated bath of some kind, which made the leeches release their hold and fall off.

Sins are like leeches—they stick. Knock them off we cannot; or, if we succeed in some instances, they get hold of us again in other ways. The only way of getting rid of our sins is God's way, and that is by yielding ourselves to the Saviour and letting Him rid us of them by His redeeming power.

Ceremony: Fellows, wouldn't it be ridiculous if some of our group walked around for days and weeks with a lot of horrible leeches clinging to their bodies. Yet there are fellows who go for weeks and even months with unforgiven sins in their hearts. This is far more serious than allowing leeches to remain on your bodies. There is only one way to get rid of sin and that is to ask Jesus to forgive you and let Him apply His cleansing, forgiving power to your heart.

As we pray together, let us ask Jesus to forgive us of any sin in our lives.

IT PAYS TO TELL THE TRUTH

Purpose: To teach boys the importance of telling the truth at all times.

Story: There is an old Persian legend of a boy named Selim. Selim was a camel driver, and one day his caravan was overtaken by robbers who took everybody's money and jewels and other valuables. When they came to Selim and searched his pockets, they could find no money. The robber chief then asked Selim, "Are you hiding any money?" Selim replied, "I have three gold pieces sewed up in a corner of my coat." "Why did you tell me?" asked the chief. Selim said, "Because my father taught me three things—to be kind to everybody, to pray to God every day, and always tell the truth."

This was something really new to the robber chief to have a person tell him the truth when it meant the loss of his money. He thought for a moment, then said to Selim: "Here, instead of taking your three gold pieces, I am going to give you three. If I had had a father like yours, I wouldn't be a robber."

It may be expensive at times to tell the truth, and sometimes it is embarrassing, but it is always best in the end. Instead of a lie being a way out of trouble, it is a quick way into trouble. Nobody loves or respects a liar. In Proverbs we read that one of the things God hates is "a lying tongue." So let us always tell the truth. If it doesn't pay off in any other way, it will be giving us the satisfaction

and peace of a good conscience.

Ceremony: A Royal Ranger is *honest*. This is part of the code we live by. Let's pray together that we shall always tell the truth.

SHEEP DOGS

Purpose: To teach boys the importance of saying no to the temptations of sin.

Story: In London, England, a man came home one evening to find a strange, but friendly, tail-wagging sheep dog on the front mat. After petting the dog he opened the door. Before his astonished gaze was a room ransacked by robbers. They had brought the sheep dog along to keep the owner's two watchdogs quiet while they burglarized his home.

And that reminds me of Joe Christian who had a watchdog named Conscience. Conscience had always been faithful, and the robber had never been able to break into Joe Christian's home.

But one day the robber came, and he had an old sheep dog along named "I don't see any harm in it." That old dog had a long name; he had a long tale, too, and Conscience got so friendly with him that the robber broke into Joe's home unnoticed. When it was all over, Conscience was sorry and felt he had learned his lesson.

Then sometime later, the robber sent another old sheep dog ahead. His name was "Everybody's doing it." And before long Conscience was so interested that he never realized that the robber got in. But when he found out he vowed never to make the same mistake.

Finally, the robber determined to break into Joe Christian's home again. He sent "What I do is my business," and Conscience was friendly with that old sheep dog immediately. When the robber broke in he stole everything Joe had. But this time it was different: Conscience was playing with a wolf that looked like a sheep dog. When the robber was done, he sicced the wolf on Conscience, and Conscience was killed.

I suppose you realize that Joe Christian could be you; the robber is the devil; and the old sheep dogs are the suggestions of the flesh and the devil. If you depend too much upon Conscience you may lose your soul, your all. Your house must be garrisoned with the Word of God and locked with prayer every day. Then no robber can break in "to steal, and to kill, and to destroy," and you will have life and "have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Ceremony: Fellows, let us pray together and ask God's help to say no when we are tempted.

FLAMES THAT CONSUME

Items needed: Several slips of paper with various things we say or do that are displeasing to God written on them; enough pinecones for each boy attending the service to have one; two containers to hold the slips of paper and pinecones; and a good campfire.

Scripture: Malachi 3:1-3.

Have the boys sit down in a circle around the campfire and pass the containers with the pinecones and slips of paper. Let each boy take one pinecone and two or three slips of paper. Have each boy read what is written on his slips and tell if they relate to his life. (This may require some help from the leader.)

After all the boys have completed this, have them fold their slips of paper and place them between the burs of the cones. Then ask them all to bow their heads and close their eyes and toss the cones into the fire. While their heads are bowed and their eyes are closed say a simple prayer that will parallel the service (one or two minutes long). Then ask them to raise their heads and look into the fire and try to identify their cones. (The papers will have been consumed and the cones charred so all will look alike.) At this time you can emphasize that with God all people are equal, and as the fire consumed the paper and the cones, so will His Spirit consume the things that are displeasing to Him, if we will let Him come into our lives.

Ceremony: As we conclude in prayer, if any of you

fellows desire to renew your vows to God, or perhaps to accept Christ for the first time, please invite the Lord to meet your need.

LIVING LIGHTS

Purpose: To encourage boys to become witnesses for Christ.

Items needed: One large candle and a small candle for each boy.

Story: To many sea creatures God has given torches so that they become living lamps. There are over 500 varieties of sea creatures that glow with a continuous light. Often the waters are just like a sheet of flame, and each wave is like liquid fire. This is caused mostly by a vast number of creatures called *Noctiluca miliaris*. These lighted creatures have gathered together in large numbers in the Atlantic Ocean. Ships have passed over many miles where they were, and while in that area it has been possible for a person to read a book on deck by their light.

Sea creatures aren't the only ones who can let their light shine. All Christians are told, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Ceremony: Fellows, there are two major ways we can let our lights shine; by our Christian conduct, and by witnessing to others. We are going to give each of you a small candle. After we light our large candle, we want each of you who wants his life to shine like a light for Jesus to light his candle from the big one.

Have you noticed how much more light there is in the room since you lit your candle? As we hold our candles let us pray that each of us in this outpost will shine in our everyday life for Jesus.

TELLING OTHERS

Purpose: To encourage boys to be witnesses.

Story: A great naturalist, Mr. Huber, tells us that if a

wasp finds some honey or other food it will return to the nest and tell the good news to its companions, who will then go in great numbers to eat the food that has been found. Isn't that a good lesson for us? We have found the most wonderful thing in the world—salvation from our sin through the blood of Jesus. Should we be so selfish that we do not go and tell others? Look around you and make a list of all your friends who are not saved. Then ask Jesus to help you win them to Him one by one.

Ceremony: Fellows, the Royal Rangers Code states that a Ranger is spiritual, that he prays, reads the Bible, and witnesses. Witnessing means to tell others about Jesus. Today I want you to think of one boy you would like to become a Christian. I want you to write his name on a piece of paper. We will then put the names in a prayer box and from time to time we will pray over them.

As we pray today, let us ask for God's help to witness to the boys whose names we wrote.

BUILDING A ROAD FOR JESUS

Purpose: To help boys see the importance of showing their gratitude to Christ for what He has done for them.

Story: Robert Louis Stevenson, who wrote such famous poems and exciting stories for boys, went to a far-off island in the Pacific to rest and regain his health. He loved the people who lived there, and helped to get many of the prisoners out of prison.

So very grateful were these prisoners that when they learned he wanted a road built through the jungle, they decided to build it themselves, though it meant months of hard work. When it was finished they called it "The Road of the Loving Heart." "For," they said, "there is no heart like yours."

We know of a heart that is more loving, though, than even the great Stevenson's. It is the heart of our Lord Jesus. He has set us free from the awful prison of sin. You, too, would like to do something to show Him your love, wouldn't you? Build a road for Him just as the Samoans

did, not of chat and cement, but by speaking kind words and doing always just the things that will please Him. He will see it all, and you will find much joy in spending your life building such a road. I wouldn't wonder if you should decide to call it "The Road of the Happy Heart."

Ceremony: Fellows, have you done anything lately to show Jesus your gratitude for what He has done for you? This week we want you to start building a road of appreciation. This week I want you to do something to show your appreciation to Christ. Next week I want a report on what you did. Now, let us pray for God's help in building this road.

WHITE ANTS AND WHITE LIES

Purpose: To help boys to see that so-called little wrongs can ruin our character.

Story: "Just listen to this," exclaimed George, as he looked up from the paper he was reading. "The white ants of Africa are the most secretive creatures in the world. Even when they are attacking whole forests, they come up under cover, building dirt tunnels up and down tree trunks to shelter them while they work. A person may rise from his chair at night, go to bed and get up in the morning and see it there apparently unchanged. But let him try to sit in it, and lo!—he and the chair are a heap on the floor. What is the matter? The white ants have come in the night and eaten all the inside out of the wooden legs, rounds, and frame. Not a nick appears on the outside, but the chair is a mere shell by daylight."

"That's an interesting bit of natural history, George," said Uncle Ed. "I was thinking, as you were reading, that white ants are not confined to Africa alone."

"What do you mean, Uncle Ed?" asked George. "I hope you do not think we will ever have any around here. I am sure I wouldn't like to have a chair look all right, and then go to pieces when someone sat down on it."

"Well, these ants you just read about remind me much of what we sometimes think of as 'little' sins—such things,

for instance, as 'white lies.' The damage such things work is not especially noticeable on the surface, but all the while they undermine and tear down character."

Ceremony: Fellows, it is so true we must be careful about letting little things creep into our hearts. There's the story about a frog egg that got into a water pipe. The egg grew into a tadpole. The tadpole became a frog, then the frog shut off the water. If there are little sins in your life, you should ask God to remove them while they are small. We are going to form a circle. Then I want all of you to close your eyes and think about any little sins in your hearts. Now let's pray that God will take those things out of our hearts.

HE KNEW HIS BIBLE

Purpose: To help boys realize that the greatest way to overcome temptation is to know and use the Bible.

Story: A boy was on a steamboat making a journey. One day as he sat alone on the deck, looking down into the deep water, two ungodly men agreed that one of them should persuade him to drink. So the wicked man drew near the boy. In a very pleasant voice and manner he invited him to go and drink a glass of wine with him.

"I thank you, sir," said the boy, "but I never drink intoxicating liquors."

"Never mind, my lad, it will not hurt you. Come and have a drink with me."

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise," was the boy's ready reply.

"You need not be deceived by it. I would not have you drink too much. A little would do you no harm, but would liven you up."

"At last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," said the boy. "And I certainly think it wiser not to play with adders."

"My fine fellow," said the crafty man, "it will give me a great deal of pleasure if you will only come and drink just

a single glass of the best imported wine with me.”

“My Bible says, ‘If sinners entice thee, consent thou not,’” was the reply.

That was a stunning blow to the tempter, and he went back to his companion, defeated.

“How did you succeed?” he asked.

“Oh, not at all. The fact is,” replied the man, “the youngster is so full of the Bible that I cannot do anything with him.”

Ceremony: Fellows, the Bible is the greatest weapon we have against temptation and evil. In fact the Bible calls it a sword (“The sword of the Spirit”). Tonight we have a Bible on this table. I want us all to lay our hands on the Bible and pray and thank God for this great weapon He has given to us.

KEYS

A Commander one day needed a safe place to keep his valuable papers. He went to his bank and rented a safety-deposit box. The bank official gave him a key and said, “You have a key and I have a key.” One day the Commander was downtown. As he passed by the bank, he remembered he needed something from the safety-deposit box, so he stopped by and asked the bank official to open the box. The official opened the outer door and asked for the Commander’s key. The Commander had left his key at home, so the box couldn’t be opened.

“You see,” said the official, “I cannot open the box without your key.” It takes both keys to get the box open.

Fellows, did you know we all have a key and our Master Ranger has one. When we pray it requires two keys. Jesus promised us many things. But before we can receive these things, we must use our key, which is the key called faith.

Do you want Jesus to pour out His blessings on you? He may be waiting for you to do your part by using your key. Jesus cannot open the door alone. He needs the willingness and faith of each of us.

Ceremony: Fellows, I want each of you who want to be

blessed by Jesus to form a circle and hold hands around me. As we pray together, I want you to ask Jesus to give you more faith to use your key.

STRONG, STURDY, AND STRAIGHT

Purpose: To teach boys to be strong, sturdy, and separated for God.

Items needed: A strong chain, a bolt, and a compass.

Story: I want to talk to you this evening about three "B's." This strong chain reminds me of the first "B." In 2 Timothy we read, "Be strong." The boy who wants to "make" the team at school must be strong. He will do the things the coach suggests in order that he may play and help win the game. Christ is looking for boys who will be strong for Him in the game of life.

This bolt suggests the second "B." It says to me, "Be sturdy." In 2 Timothy 2:3, Paul says, "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." A soldier endures hardship for the sake of his country. The football player never complains about the scratches and bumps he receives in the game. If the soldier and the football player go through hard things without complaining, don't you think the Christian should do as much for Christ?

This compass reminds me of the third "B," which we find in 2 Timothy 2:4. Paul wanted Timothy to "Be straight," that is, separated from worldly, evil things; and he said, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." He wanted Timothy to go straight.

Ceremony: Fellows, in looking at the chain, bolt, and compass, I am reminded of Daniel. In Daniel 1:8 we read, "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank." He refused to break or bend his resolution. He went straight.

Daniel, like Paul, believed in being strong, sturdy, and separated from evil. Is it any wonder that God gave this young man a place of real leadership? Fellows, be strong,

sturdy, and straight, and God can use you as truly as He did Daniel and Timothy.

Fellows, let us pray together that we will always be like God wants us to be.

DON'T WASTE YOUR LIFE

Purpose: To teach boys to accept Christ while they are young.

Items needed: A straight stick, a crooked stick burned at both ends, and a glass of ashes.

Story: What is the matter with this stick? (Hold up the burned one.) Yes, it is burned at both ends. Have any of you been in danger from playing with fire? Many have played with fire without knowing it.

Can you guess what is in this glass?

"It looks like ashes."

Yes, these are ashes. Sin does to boys what fire does to wood. It destroys usefulness. Do you see anything wrong with this clean, straight stick? No, and you could easily make something useful of it, if you had the proper tools, but you would find it very difficult to make anything useful of this burned and crooked stick.

Ceremony: Fellows, people are like sticks. Some people become Christians early and give their lives to the Lord to be used by Him. Others wait until sin has so marred their lives that there is nothing left to give God but the ashes of a wasted life.

This is the reason that God tells us in Ecclesiastes 12:1, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." God wants boys to accept Christ while they are young and then He can take their whole lives and really use them.

Fellows, as we pray, let us completely give our lives to Christ while we are still young, so Christ can completely use our lives.

TOO WEAK

Purpose: To encourage boys to become strong enough to stand for their convictions.

Story: When Aaron Burr was a young man in college, he was under deep conviction during a great revival meeting. One day he strongly felt God's voice calling him to become a Christian. He started down the aisle toward the inquiry room, intending there to settle the question of his soul's salvation. As he went down the aisle, he chanced to overhear one young man say to another, "There goes Aaron Burr." There seemed to be a sneer in his voice. Instantly, Aaron turned aside. He refused to accept God into his life. How doomed his life was! He betrayed his country and later died. And all because he was too weak to do what he knew was right, when someone made fun of him.

Ceremony: Fellows, it is a sign of strength when we stand for what we believe is right, and it is a sign of weakness when we fail to do what we believe is right because we are afraid of what someone will think or say. The Royal Rangers Code states that a Ranger is courageous. Let's conclude our devotion by praying to God for courage and strength to stand for what we believe is right.

A TEST OF HONESTY

Purpose: To teach boys what real honesty is.

Story: What would you do if you found a stamped, sealed envelope, directed to someone else, in which you could clearly feel a silver half-dollar? If you were a Christian, you would drop it in the mailbox at once. If you weren't a Christian, would you pocket the money?

To test people's honesty, some Chicago scientists "lost" 100 envelopes like these on the city sidewalks. All envelopes were picked up within an hour, but only 54 of them were mailed. The test proved that 46 of the 100 finders considered themselves "keepers"—and therefore couldn't be trusted. We just hope that none of them called themselves Christians!

Somebody has said, "A person's character is shown by what he does when nobody is looking." It isn't hard to be honest when you might be caught if you were dishonest.

But God sees you as you are when you find something valuable and make no effort to discover its owner . . . when you forget to pay your fare on a crowded bus . . . when you peek at your book during an exam while your teacher isn't looking.

Ceremony: Fellows, the Royal Rangers Code states, "A Royal Ranger is honest. He does not lie, cheat, or steal." Let us stand together and pray that God will help us to be honest in all that we do.

TESTING OURSELVES

Purpose: To show boys the importance of self-testing their spirituality.

Items needed: A Royal Rangers handbook and a pencil for each boy.

Story: In school every week or so you have to take a test. Then your teacher finds out just how much you know—or don't know! If you have studied your arithmetic, or geography, or history every day, it is not hard, and you don't mind taking the test. But if you haven't you are afraid of the test, and that you will make a low grade. The night before the test you "cram." You try to learn everything at once, but it doesn't work, does it? So you learn to look forward to the time of the test, so that you might be ready for it, and get a 100 percent. After all, tests are really good for us, for they urge study. The Psalmist David must have known this when he asked, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try (test) me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Let us test our lives every day, so that in that day when "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is," we will be 100 percent on the Lord's side!

Ceremony: Fellows, in Royal Rangers, the test sheet for our conduct is the Royal Rangers Code. Please open your handbook to the Code. Now we want you to take your pencil and grade yourself. Place a grade by each point in the Code. If you think you are doing *real good*, place an

"A"; *good*, grade "B"; *fair*, grade "C"; if you are *failing*, grade "F"; etc. In the days to come, check your grades often. When you believe you are improving, change the grade. Make a practice of testing your conduct and spirituality.

CROWING OUT OF TURN

Purpose: To teach fellows that there is a time to keep quiet as well as a time to speak.

Story: One morning a missionary was going along the road toward Panghai with a friend. On the way he passed near a village. There was a path going into the village, and right where the path turned off from the road he saw something he had never seen before. Somebody had taken a stick about a yard long and driven it into the ground. On top of the stick was a rooster's head, stuck on so that the wide-open mouth was straight up, as though he were crowing at the moon.

"What's that for?" he asked the man with him.

"Oh, I guess that was somebody's rooster that crowed out of turn."

"What do you mean 'crowed out of turn'?"

"Why, you know when a rooster goes to roost with a good cropful of worms and corn and things, he has no business to be making a noise and waking people up. If he crows before midnight it is a bad sign—maybe thieves are around or something. These people must have been mad at that rooster for crowing at the wrong time, and stuck his wide-open mouth up as a warning."

And it set me to thinking. Surely roosters are not the only fellows that talk out of turn! I have often heard fellows giving backtalk to parents and leaders! And we are so often saying things that hurt others. I'm afraid we would all be out of luck if we were treated like the rooster who crowed out of turn.

Ceremony: Fellows, I suppose most of us are guilty of saying things we shouldn't say and talking when we shouldn't be talking. Have you been guilty of crowing out

of turn? We don't want a lot of crowing roosters in our outpost, do we? If we backtalk or sound off at the wrong time, we can spoil an entire meeting. I would like to see the hands of those who will promise they will try not to crow out of turn. Now let's pray that God will help us.

TOGETHER AS A TEAM

Preparation: Before leaving for a camp-out, assign each boy something to be responsible for, such as matches, shovel, hand ax, etc.

Fellows, while we are gathered around this campfire this evening, I want to try to show you how important it is that we all stick together as a team and be able to depend upon one another. Before me I have placed the various articles that you were asked to be responsible for. First, the matches here in my hand. Without them, we would not have been able to build this campfire. Someone had to bring them. Next, we have a shovel we use to trench our tent, clear the campfire site, and bury our rubbish and trash before we leave the camping area. Next, we have a tent rope that we must have in order to pitch our tent and the pins with which we secure our tent to the ground. Someone brought these articles too. We have the first-aid kit that we depend upon when someone gets injured. Without it we could be in serious trouble. Next, we have the hand ax we use in cutting firewood and driving the tent pins into the ground. Oh yes, we cannot forget the containers we use to store our fresh water, and the pots and pans in which we prepare our food. Someone had to bring these too.

Now, let's look around about us at the other things that were brought along to make the camp-out and campfire possible. Let us remember we have an obligation to our group to be responsible for the things that have been committed to our care. Has anyone forgotten the article that was assigned to him? We hope not. Let us hope this will be a lesson to each one of us—we need one another. What do you say, let's all stick together and make this a better world in which to live.

Ceremony: Now, fellows, let's take the hand of the Ranger nearest us and unite our hearts and minds together in prayer to Christ, our Master Ranger.

A GOOD SOLDIER

Purpose: To emphasize the importance of being a good Royal Ranger and Christian all the way.

Story: For several years Hernando was a guerrilla soldier who fought in one of the brutal bandit bands that still ravage the backlands of Colombia, South America. A Christian believer witnessed to him and led him to the Lord. On the day that he was baptized in water, he testified, "I fought with all my strength for my guerrilla band, but now I am a soldier for the Lord Jesus Christ, and I will give all my strength to Him."

There are many forces against us in our fight to be good Royal Rangers and Christians. Just to go along for the ride is one thing, but to become involved in the battle for good sometimes causes much resistance. Our enemy, the devil, is continually getting and enlisting new help to promote evil, in an effort to defeat us.

Discussion: How can we best be loyal Royal Rangers? How can we best serve the Lord when it may mean strong resistance from Satan?

Ceremony: Our energy is used for something: either it will be constructive and helpful, or it will be of very little help to us or to anyone else. May we choose to use our energy for God and His work. If this is our desire, let us raise our right hand to our Chief Ranger, Jesus Christ, and repeat the Pledge together.

TEAMWORK

Purpose: To instill in each Royal Ranger the importance of working together as a team.

Items needed: Pieces of string. (Have each Ranger take a piece of string and make a loop and tie. Let each Ranger add his link and put them together like a chain.)

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:9: "For we are laborers together with God."

I would like to give you some examples of teamwork and the importance that it plays in our Royal Rangers outpost. In a football game it takes all 11 players on the field working together as a team to win. In a basketball game it takes the cooperation of all five players on the court working together as a unit to win. On a baseball diamond it takes all nine players giving their best and playing together as a team to win the game. In the church, the pastor cannot do it by himself, but it takes all the church members doing their share and working together as a team in order to win souls for Christ.

In Royal Rangers, we must have the same teamwork they have on a football field, basketball court, baseball diamond, or in a great church. We cannot expect the Commander to do all the work. He must have the teamwork and cooperation of the Lieutenant Commander, Senior Guide, Guides, Assistant Guides, members, and recruits. Each Ranger must do his share and carry his weight if we are to win. You must complete your Bible study course, pass your requirements, attend your meetings regularly, be faithful in attending Sunday school and church, clean up your meeting area, obey your leaders and those in authority, etc. When you do not carry out your duties or responsibilities you break the link or chain, and your team (Royal Rangers) will suffer or be defeated. (Have the boys pull the chain and break the link.)

Ceremony: I would challenge each of our Royal Rangers to purpose in his heart to be a better Royal Ranger by promoting more teamwork in his outpost. Remember we are all laborers (Royal Rangers) together with God. Let's bow our heads in prayer and ask the Lord to help us always to be like a strong link in the chain.

WE MUST ALL HAVE A PILOT

One day a retired sea captain stood with his grandson on a high point overlooking the entrance of a large harbor.

They were taking turns looking through the grandfather's powerful telescope. At the moment, the lad had the glasses focused on a large ship that was heading toward the harbor entrance. A tugboat was coming out to intercept the ship.

The boy watched as the tug came alongside the ship. He saw a man climb a ladder from the tug to the deck of the ship.

The boy asked, "Granddad, why did that tugboat stop and put that man on board the ship?"

The old man smiled and laid a hand lovingly on the boy's shoulder. "Lad, that man you saw go aboard the ship was a harbor pilot. It is maritime custom and law for the pilot to meet every incoming ship and steer it safely into the harbor."

"Why?" asked the boy.

"Well, lad," said his grandfather, "every harbor is different. The channels, tides, and currents are different. A captain may have sailed the seas for many years, yet not have entered every port. He, therefore, would not know all the details about a particular harbor. The ship could run aground, or onto the rocks. That is why the pilot comes to steer it safely in. He knows the way."

"I see," said the boy.

A peaceful smile lit the grandfather's face as he gazed out to sea. "Our lives are a lot like a ship. The sea is like the sea of life, and heaven is the harbor we are trying to make. This has been our goal since we first set sail. The voyage may be long or it may be short, according to the will of our Heavenly Father. But, like the ship, we must have a pilot to steer us home.

"The Holy Spirit is the Pilot that our Heavenly Father sends to meet us and wants to put on board our ship. For you see, Son, heaven is a port that no captain has ever dropped his anchor in and then sailed away from again.

"Once we make that port, our Heavenly Father will meet us and say, 'Welcome home.' But the Pilot must steer us over the bar. We cannot do it ourselves."

Ceremony: Do you have a pilot for your life? If you don't, step forward and let us pray with you.

COMMUNICATING WITH GOD

Purpose: To help boys become aware of the strength they have through prayer.

Story: Fellows, how many of you have a radio in your home? (Have a show of hands and thank them.) Have you ever wondered why you get a different station whenever you turn the knob? Why don't all the stations come in at the same time?

Let me tell you a story. There was an airplane traveling across country one day when a heavy fog started to set in. The pilot radioed to the nearest airport, which was approximately 15 miles away, requesting permission to land. The control tower told the pilot they were closing down fast. (That means the fog was setting in fast.) The tower advised the pilot to try another airport that was farther away. The pilot said he was unable to reach the other airport as he was low on fuel. The control tower informed the pilot to change his radio to another frequency and gave him the number of the frequency. This would be the airport GCA, which means Ground Control to Air. The pilot then changed to the required frequency and identified himself to GCA. They instructed him to turn to a new heading so they could identify him on the radar. When they had identified him, they gave him the heading to turn to in order to reach the airport. They started to tell him if he lost radio contact to change to frequency Number—(pause for effect), but suddenly the radio went dead, before the number could be transmitted. There was the pilot, approaching the airport in fog, without contact with the airport transmitter. He tried to call GCA but received no answer. Then he thought of the emergency frequency. He switched to this frequency and heard the welcome voice of the man at GCA. He was then directed into a safe landing.

Ceremony: Fellows, this story should have answered some of the questions I asked at the beginning. Different radio stations cannot be heard at the same time because they operate on different frequencies. Fellows, communicating with God is just as it is with radios; if we are not

on the right frequency we do not communicate with God. God is a Spirit. When we are saved, our spiritual life is reborn and then we can commune with God in the Spirit. Let's bow our heads and communicate with God.

THE INDIAN BATTLE

Purpose: To teach Rangers to listen and be able to spot the call of Satan or the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Story: Fellows, there is a battlefield out west that was the scene of a furious conflict between the U.S. Cavalry and the Indians. It was known as the Infernal Caverns Battleground. The battle took place between the U.S. troops and the Shoshone, Paiute, and Pit Indians on September 27 and 28, 1867. The Indians took refuge in a series of caverns located at the top of a rocky slope. In the battle that took place, over a third of the command was killed or wounded. Six soldiers were buried at the foot of the slope.

As the soldiers got settled into a safe position on that first night they had to be alert. The Indians often used bird or animal calls for signals. The soldiers had to be able to detect the real call of the bird or animal from that of an Indian. Their lives depended on it. You know, fellows, that's the same thing we have to do in our lives today. Satan will call to us, telling us it's okay to do this or to do that, but it is a fake call just like the ones used by the Indians. We should be able to tell the difference between Satan's call and the real thing—that of the Holy Spirit. Knowing the difference may mean life or death to us too.

Ceremony: Let's join hands around the campfire and join in a prayer that the Lord will help us to know the difference between the false call of Satan and the real call of the Holy Spirit.

MISSIONARIES

Does everyone know what a missionary is? A missionary is someone who takes the gospel to people in foreign lands.

In this way, the church can fulfill the Great Commission given us by the Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

What can Royal Rangers do to help our missionaries? A lot more than you might think!

First, we can *pray* for them. If their mission is to be a success, people must be reached, so our prayers are important. We should also pray for God's hand of protection as they face many dangers.

Second, we can *give* in the missions offering at church. Our missionaries look to churches like ours for their only means of support. Some of them have boys in their homes your age. Let's not forget their needs.

Third, we can dedicate our lives to Jesus Christ, willing to *go* anywhere He may lead. Some of you here this evening may one day be missionaries. Purpose in your heart to answer any call for Christian service.

Ceremony: Pray, give, and go. Let's begin tonight by bowing our heads and praying for our missionaries.

CAMPFIRES

Read: The Battle Hymn of the Republic—emphasize verse of campfires. What is the purpose of a campfire? (Light, heat, cooking, protection, etc.)

Have you ever noticed how enjoyable it is to sit around the campfire? How the fire cheers you and dispells the darkness? You remember how people used to gather around Jesus? How they used to gather close and listen to every word He said? He was sort of like the campfire. The Bible speaks of Him as being the Light of the World, and very often in Scripture you will find He is contrasted against the spirit or the prince of darkness. It seems whenever men sat around Him, their darkness was dispersed.

You've probably read how early men used to build fires at night to protect themselves and drive away the creatures of the night. Many an old trapper would throw another log on the fire when he heard the cry of the wolf. Can you imagine what it would be like to live in a world of

darkness, to walk through the woods hearing sounds, not knowing what made them? It would be scary, wouldn't it? It seems that when a person is afraid of night it is always such a relief for him to see the dawn of a new day. Can you imagine how it would be to live in this world without Christ, the Eternal Light? I think it would be frightening because you would have no hope of ever escaping from the darkness which the Bible refers to as sin. You know, when I was a sinner, I really hated to see the sun go down. It always used to leave me with an empty feeling to see the night come. Now, since I am a Christian, everything is different. You know why? Well, I guess it is because I carry my light with me now—you might say my own little campfire. Don't you remember that in the Bible Christ said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world"? When you have Christ in your heart, and the Holy Spirit living within you, they dispel all fear and darkness.

Ceremony: Let us each look up from the campfire into the night above and ask the Lord to help us to be lights in the world.

HURTING JESUS

Purpose: To show how our sins hurt Christ.

Item needed: A whip.

Story: A man dreamed that he saw Jesus tied to a whipping post and a soldier was scourging Him. He saw the whip in the soldier's hand, with its thick lashes studded here and there with lead, which was intended to cut into the flesh. And as the soldier brought the whip down on the bare shoulders of Jesus, the dreamer shuddered when he saw the marks and bloodstains it left behind. When the soldier raised his hand to strike again, the dreamer rushed forward, intending to stop him. As he did so, the soldier turned around and the dreamer saw—himself. We often think how cruel those men must have been who scourged and crucified Jesus. But whenever we do wrong we, too, cause the heart of Jesus to bleed with sorrow and pain.

Ceremony: Fellows, in my hand I hold a whip. Can you imagine what it would be like to be whipped with it? Suppose Jesus appeared before us today. Would any of you want to take this whip and begin to beat Him? I'm sure none of you would, yet some of you are just as guilty of hurting Him because of sinful acts in your life. I am going to pass this whip to each boy. When you receive it, if you do not want to hurt Jesus I want you to throw it on the floor. By doing so you are saying in your heart, "Lord Jesus, I do not want to hurt you anymore." Now let's pray for Him to forgive us of any sin that has hurt Him.

DON'T GET HOOKED

Give each boy in the group a fishhook and a piece of canvas about four inches square.

Have each boy put the hook through the piece of canvas. Have the boys attempt to take the hook out of the canvas. Explain to the boys how the hooks resemble bad habits—smoking, drinking, stealing, lying. It's easier to get hooked than it is to get free. Relate to them different instances of how people we work with and associate with are trying to break these bad habits without the help of God and how impossible it is. Warn them of the danger of getting hooked by these habits themselves. Some men think it manly to smoke and drink, but it only reveals their weakness. Real men—such as good Christians, good athletes, good leaders—don't have these habits.

Ceremony: Now fellows, I want each of you to bring your hook and canvas to the front and drop them in the pile. Remain here as we close in prayer.

WHY A STREAM IS BEAUTIFUL

Some say a stream is beautiful because it is flowing. This is partly true, but I think most of its beauty comes from the obstacles it encounters on its long journey. Rocks make the water splash, spray, and gurgle, with patches of white

foam spotted around them. If a stream were straight, with no obstacles in its path, you would soon tire of it.

The rocks cause beauty on the outside, but what about the hidden beauty? As the water is dashed against the rocks it absorbs oxygen, which kills harmful bacteria. It also keeps the stream fresh and life-giving.

A stream teaches us a lesson. It's the obstacles that get in our way in life that make our lives interesting and worthwhile. If we study the lives of most great men, we will find that the most fascinating phase of their lives was in their early days of struggle and hardship.

A stream seems to have fun overcoming handicaps. It sings, laughs, and roars around the rocks as it rushes on to its destination. We, as Christians, also have a destination in life. God has promised that He will not give us any obstacles that we can't overcome. So, with God's help, we can enjoy life and meet all obstacles with full assurance that we will overcome them.

Ceremony: Life will always have problems and difficulties. There's no way to escape them. How we react to these circumstances of life is very important. Let's pray and ask the Lord to help our lives be like a flowing stream.

WHAT KILLED THE ELM?

Purpose: To illustrate that it is the "little things" that oftentimes make us stumble.

There is a true story about a schoolteacher who had taught in a little town for over 30 years. Outside his office window stood an old elm tree. He passed by the tree every day and always thought to himself as he saw it, "How old is that tree? It must be at least one hundred or more years old." He often thought how the old tree had weathered all sorts of storms and how many times it had been struck by lightning. It had even withstood three tornados. How tall it stood, pushing its limbs into the heavens!

One day the teacher noticed something odd about the old tree. The leaves were falling off the giant five or six weeks earlier than the other trees. He called a man to come

and examine the tree. It was discovered that the majestic old tree was dying. "What is killing the elm?" asked the teacher. The tree expert explained that a little bug that attacks only elms was killing the tree. A very small bug was doing what the fierce storms could *not* do!

Boys, it's the little things that often keep us from serving God. We need to search our hearts each day to be sure they are free from all sins—large or small.

Ceremony: Is there anything that's keeping you from serving God? Bow your heads and let's pray that God will help us overcome it.

THE MIRACLE OF LEAVES

Gather some leaves—all different kinds. Hold some of them up before your Rangers. Ask the boys to try to find one leaf that is exactly like another one—they won't be able to do it!

Begin to tell them of the mystery of the forest—how God made every tree and every leaf different from any other. And God also made every person different from any other too! But, in spite of the great differences we see in each other, God gave each one of us one thing in common—a *soul*. Stress the fact that God loves each one of us as much as another, and He shows no partiality. Conclude by emphasizing that God wants complete control of each one of us. Despite our differences, we can all do one thing that will please Him—give Him our lives.

Ceremony: Now, each of you take a leaf. It represents your soul. Hold it in your hand and let's repeat John 3:16 in closing.

A GRAPEVINE

Fellows, tonight for our devotion we are outside to show you something that will help you in your Christian life. I am going to show you how your life and a grapevine (hold up grapevine) are somewhat alike.

When a rancher wants to grow really fine grapes he must cut off all the old branches and throw them into the fire. He never cuts off any of the main vine because new vines grow from the main vine and produce new grapes.

You know, after we become Christians (hold up grape vine again) sometimes God has to get out the pruning shears and cut off all the branches in our life that are not putting out fruit. (Read John 15:2, then start to cut off some of the branches of the grapevine and throw them into the fire.) If we are truly good Christians, we want only the branches that are putting out fruit. (Reading God's Word, testifying, and leading souls to God.)

Ceremony: As we bow our heads in closing, can you think of any branches in your life that you should let God cut off and throw into the fire? (Stop for a while, then close, asking God to help them cut the branches.)

APPLE SEEDS

Purpose: To help boys understand they must die to self and let God live in their lives.

Preparation: Hold an apple seed in your hand so the boys can't see it.

Fellows, I hold in my hand an apple tree full of bright Red Delicious apples. (Pause to let this statement sink in. Then ask how many of them believe this. Thank them for their response and show them the apple seed.)

Fellows, this is a Red Delicious apple seed. This is potentially a tree full of apples. But it must be put in the ground where it will die and then an apple tree will grow from it. As long as I keep this apple seed out of the ground it will potentially be an apple tree but will never become one. It has to be put into the ground, where it will die and then grow into an apple tree. This is like our Christian life. We have to die to our self-will. We have to give up our will and obey God's will, then we will grow to be strong Christians with fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

Ceremony: The Royal Rangers Pledge is a promise of service to others. Let's stand and repeat the Pledge, then

depart from this meeting with an even greater determination to serve God and others.

QUENCHING THE SPIRIT

Build a small fire next to the large campfire. Have a bucket containing enough water to completely extinguish the small fire, nearby.

Explain that the Holy Spirit is symbolized as fire. Tell what the Holy Spirit does inside a man; fire warms, illuminates, spreads, and purifies. We are to keep this fire burning within us by refueling it with prayer, Bible study, love, and service. (Each time you speak of one of the above, throw a piece of tinder or kindling on the fire. Allow it to begin to burn well before going to the next point.)

In 1 Thessalonians 5:19 we are told, "Quench not the Spirit." When you quench something, you extinguish it, put it out, as water will quench this fire. You can quench the fire of the Holy Spirit that is within you by:

1. Waters of worldliness.
2. Smothering it with indifference.
3. Isolation from fellow Christians. (Embers die out when scattered.)

Take the bucket of water and quench your small fire as an example of how the Spirit is quenched.

Have four stacks of kindling to one side labeled Prayer, Bible Study, Love, and Service. Have each boy choose a stick from one of the four stacks and cast it into the big fire as a symbol that he wants the "fire of the Holy Spirit" to be refueled in his heart in this particular area.

Ceremony: Have a closing prayer with everyone standing around the fire.

WHAT IS IN YOUR HEART?

Items needed: Chalk, blackboard, and eraser.

Preparation: Draw a large picture of a heart on the blackboard.

Scripture reading: Psalm 22:26 and Ezekiel 18:31.

Rangers, I would like to speak to you for a few moments about your heart. We all know that our heart is the most important part of our body. When our heart stops beating and pumping our blood, we die.

The question I want to ask you is, "What is in your heart?" Are you growing the right things in your heart? Are you taking good care and cultivating your heart each day? Your heart is just like a garden. If you don't hoe your garden and pull the weeds and thorns out, you will be growing the wrong things. The same is true about your heart.

Do you have jealousy, hate, dishonesty, fear, evil, anger, cheating, and stealing growing in your heart? (Write these inside the heart.)

Rangers, I would like to challenge each of you to replace these weeds and thorns in your heart with some beautiful flowers. Let's replace jealousy with love, dishonesty with honesty, stealing with good deeds, cheating with truthfulness, anger with joy, hate with thankfulness, fear with faith, and evil with good. (Erase the weeds growing inside the heart and write in the flowers.)

Now, let's look and see what we have growing in our heart. You must agree that with all the flowers growing, it looks much more beautiful. How do you go about keeping your heart or garden in this condition? You must cultivate and hoe your garden daily. You can do this by daily Bible reading, devoting a few minutes each day in prayer, and attending your church and Sunday school regularly. By doing all these things, I know that God will be faithful in His promises and see that your heart grows only the most beautiful flowers.

Ceremony: Look at the person beside you. Can you see what's in his heart? Of course not! But God knows what's in both of your hearts. Let's stand and repeat the Royal Ranger Pledge and Code.

MATCHES

Items needed: Two wooden matches, one waxed and one plain; water glass, half-full of water.

Story: These two matches represent two lives—one without Christ (the plain match), and the other with Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit (the waxed match). Holding the two up together, they start out looking the same. Oh, if you look closely the one looks a little different from the other, but they are the same except for one small important thing, the Holy Spirit (covered with wax).

Now, this glass of water represents the world and our journey through it. I will put these two lives into the world (the matches into the glass of water). (Put your hand over the mouth of the glass and shake the matches violently in the covered glass of water.)

This is the violent, stormy world. Notice that both lives are going through the same trials.

(Stop shaking the glass and pick out the plain match.) This is the life without Christ, and now his life ends. (Strike the match against the striking plate on the match-box and get a little smoke with a fizzle burn. Now, take the waxed match out of the glass.) This is the life filled with Christ. It strikes, lights, snaps, pops, and burns brilliantly. What a difference. The Christian ends with a brilliant light as a witness to others. The non-Christian just fizzles and never shows a light.

Which match would you rather be?

THE FOX WITHOUT FLEAS

Did you know that there is one animal in the world that will never be caught with fleas on it? Yes, that's right. It's the fox. We have often heard of the fox as being very smart. The smart fox, when he has fleas on his body, will go to a body of water, such as a river or stream. There he will get a stick in his mouth and slowly back down into the water. Then, when only his nose and the stick remain out of the water, the fleas will crawl onto the stick

because they will drown in the water. When all the fleas have gotten onto the stick, the fox will drop the stick into the water and leave it there as he walks back up the bank and goes on his way. We, as Royal Rangers, need to remember that when there is sin in our lives we need to go to Jesus and ask Him to cover us with His blood. Because where the blood of Jesus is, there can be no sin; and the sin has to leave us just as the fleas had to leave the fox in the water.

Ceremony: (1 John 1:9) If you will come to Jesus and ask Him to cleanse you from all unrighteousness, He will become your Saviour tonight!

A SPOILED DAY

Items needed: Three water glasses, water, iodine, and household ammonia.

Preparation: Put some plain water in one glass, water colored with iodine in another, and household ammonia in the third glass. As you begin the devotional, hold the glass of clear water.

This glass of water represents a perfect day when everybody in the home is happy. But John is late for breakfast, and when he does come to the table he pulls his sister's pigtails. She tries to stop him, and her glass of milk is spilled on Mother's new tablecloth. Mother rebukes John and he talks back to her, at which point Father takes over with a stern and heavy hand. (Pour the colored water into the glass of clear water.) Now the perfect day has been spoiled. John and Mary go off to school, with John walking on ahead, for he does not want to walk with his sister.

During the day John thinks of the incident at breakfast and he is ashamed of his actions. On the way home from school he is nicer than usual to Mary. When he gets home, he tells his mother that he is sorry about the trouble he caused. Then, when John's father comes home from work, he finds everybody happy again. Forgiveness has removed the ugly stains of trouble. (Pour the ammonia into the colored water and it will become clear.)

When repentance opens the way, forgiveness will come in. When forgiveness comes into your soul, the trouble vanishes. When Jesus comes into your heart, the blackness disappears, just like the trouble in John's home.

Ceremony: Some of you may have never experienced salvation. Now would be a great time to step forward and let us ask Jesus to come into your heart.

GIVING THANKS

Purpose: To help boys see the importance of thanking Christ.

Story: A number of years ago, when a ship was wrecked in a storm off Evanston, Illinois, a group of students at Northwestern University endeavored to save the drowning passengers. One of the men, Edward Spencer, saved 17 persons from the sinking ship. As he was being carried exhausted to his room, he asked, "Did I do my best? Do you think I did my best?"

Years afterwards, Dr. Torrey was recounting this incident in a meeting in Los Angeles when a man in the audience called out that Edward Spencer himself was present. Dr. Torrey paused and invited Spencer to the platform. Amid loud applause, an old man slowly climbed the steps. Dr. Torrey asked him what in particular stood out in his memory of the rescue. Spencer replied, "Only this, sir. Of the 17 people I saved, not one of them ever thanked me."

Ceremony: Fellows, we often ask for God's help but forget to thank Him for what He has done for us. Let's open our Bibles to Luke 17:11-19. We read the story of the 10 lepers who asked the Lord to heal them, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." The Lord cleansed their bodies and sent them on their way. Only one, when he saw he was healed, turned back and glorified God, and fell down on his face giving Him thanks. Christ asked where the other nine were. They didn't return to give thanks. The Lord said, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." Always remember to give thanks when something has been done for you or given to you.

THE WEDGE

Item needed: An ax.

Before me I have an ax, which will furnish the subject of our devotion today. There are three important parts to the ax. The handle, which is made of wood, is of a selected hard wood. Hickory is generally chosen for this as it is a hard wood and is durable for such a purpose. Soft woods would not do, as they break with the blows. Upon the handle is placed the ax head, which is made of tempered steel that can be made sharp by grinding. The handle is made fast to the ax by the third part, which is called the wedge. The wedge is driven into the wood between the sides of the ax. This makes them inseparable.

Let us compare ourselves with an ax, held together with the wedge which is the Holy Spirit. When we are held together by the Holy Spirit we are ready to do the work that God has for us to do. An ax that has lost the wedge is useless. If we lose the wedge of the Holy Spirit, we too will lose our usefulness. Have you noticed that when an ax is not used every day, it becomes rusty and dull? God has to use us every day to keep us sharp. God can use us to help those around us who have never been saved. Defeat Satan by bringing other boys to our meeting so that the Word of God and the Holy Spirit's convicting power can do their work. Let us be a good ax for God, held together by the Holy Spirit.

Ceremony: How many will promise to invite one new boy to our outpost meeting next week? That's good! Now, let's pray and thank the Lord for the privilege of being Royal Rangers.

POSTAGE STAMP

Item needed: An envelope addressed to you.

I want you to think about the postage stamp. Here's an envelope addressed to your Commander which was received a few days ago. Inside was a letter for me. But before I could receive it, a postage stamp had to do its work.

This stamp represents its country. It says, "U.S. postage"; its value was assigned by the United States, otherwise it would be worthless. You and I, as Royal Rangers, also represent Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul said we are *ambassadors* for Him.

The stamp is necessary. Without it, the Post Office would not deliver the letter. *You* are important! Without your witness, many boys may never know about the Lord.

A stamp is small, but made for service. Perhaps you think boys can't do much, but you're wrong. One boy about your age gave his lunch to Jesus and then watched as the Master multiplied five loaves and two fishes to feed 5,000 men, plus women and children!

The little stamp is entrusted with an important message. This letter told me something I needed to know. We too have a message of how Jesus saves, heals, baptizes with the Holy Spirit, and is coming again.

The stamp sometimes suffers abuse—it gets a good "licking." It's torn, postmarked, moistened too heavily, or scratched. There are times, fellows, when you and I must also suffer for the cause of Christ.

But the postage stamp sticks to the task until it is done—it does not become discouraged. This letter was mailed from a distant city. Had the stamp quit on the way, the letter may have been delayed or lost. It's important that in life we remain at our post of duty even though the going gets rough.

Finally, the stamp goes wherever it is sent, attached here in the upper right-hand corner. Right now, you fellows live, work, and play in our community and see people every day that you know. Someday, when you grow up to be men, our Lord may want you to go to a place you've never been, to tell others about Jesus. If He does, then be like the postage stamp, willing to go wherever God sends you!

Ceremony: Are you willing to be a "postage stamp" for the Master? Let's pray now that His stamp of approval will always be upon our work for Him.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

Items needed: Candles and matches.

Purpose: To challenge each Royal Ranger to live such a life that his light will shine before others and they will know that he is a Christian.

Scripture: Matthew 5:14-16.

The Bible tells us that we are the light of the world. As Christians, we should be like a city built upon a high hill where our lights cannot be hidden. The Bible also gives us this example: Nobody lights a lamp to put it under a bowl; instead he puts it on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In Matthew 5:16, we find these words: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." We must live a godly life every minute of the day in order that our light will shine before the persons we see and come into contact with each day. We must let them see the good things we do and what we stand for. By letting our light shine, they will see the good things we do. By doing this, we will give praise and glorify our Father which is in heaven. Are you letting your light shine tonight? Are you giving God the praise that He deserves and letting your everyday witness glorify His name? If you are not, you can make a commitment and begin this very night. If you are serious and want to make such a commitment, take your candle, light it, and stand up. Do not light your candle if you do not intend to keep your promise to Jesus. By lighting your candle and standing up, you are indicating to Jesus Christ that you will let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and that you are a Christian. If you will take this stand, you will be glorifying your Father which is in heaven.

Ceremony: Let's stand and sing the chorus, "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."

A LEAD PENCIL

Items needed: A variety of pencils: some new, a stub, an Eversharp, some large, and some small.

Story: "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer" (Psalm 45:1).

The lead pencil is a very common article, but a very useful one. The artist and the architect, the businessman and the schoolboy, the doctor, all of us use the pencil. It is similar to man's life in its everyday work, and teaches us some valuable lessons.

The thing that counts most in a lead pencil is the quality of the lead. If it is too hard, crumbly, or gritty, no matter how pretty the outside is, it is of no use. So it is with each of us. The body may be almost perfect in stature and physique, yet if the soul is bad, that life will not count for much. King Saul was a fine-looking man, but he had a very defective soul. David was a much less imposing man, yet God chose him because he had a good, honest, and humble heart. It was his inner life that made him acceptable.

The wood of this pencil must be whittled away before it is usable. The selfishness, pride, and self-will must be whittled away from our lives before we can be used by God. If the pencil could feel the wood being cut away, it would hurt. But the cutting gives it a point and makes it useful. Trials and discipline will do the same for us; they give us a clearer edge and finer point.

Mistakes are sure to happen, and that is what this eraser was put here for—to correct them. This speaks of forgiveness. Our nature is such that we make mistakes and sin, but if we will ask His forgiveness, He will forgive us and erase our sins.

A human life is never in competent hands until it is placed in the hands of the Master. Paul, until he gave himself into the Master's hand, was a blasphemer and a murderer at heart. When he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and became obedient to Christ, he became one of the greatest of men in the Bible. The secret of Dwight L. Moody's life was that he put himself fully into God's hands.

This new pencil looks the best, but this stub pencil shows that it has done much work; and who knows how important that work may have been? There is more honor in old

age, after a life of service to God, than in a life that has never become involved in service.

This Eversharp reminds us of "everlasting life." Ordinary pencils wear out and are thrown away. This Eversharp may last for a lifetime. Our lives, like these ordinary pencils, wear out and come to an end. But Jesus tells us, "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Ceremony: Tonight, Jesus can place within your heart the hope and assurance of eternal life. As we pray, invite Him to become your Saviour.

ROTTEN LIMBS

Purpose: To make the boys aware that it is what is on the inside of a person that counts.

Item needed: A dead limb (birch or similar type) from the surrounding area that appears strong from the outside, but is weak or rotten inside.

Rangers, have you ever found a piece of wood lying in the forest—one that looked quite solid and sound, but when you lashed it into a camp gadget you found it was rotten inside and couldn't be used? A birch stick, for example, can look quite solid, but when you pick it up to use it you find that only the bark is holding the rotted inside together.

Some fellows are just like these rotted sticks. Their outward appearance is such that most people believe they are real gentlemen. It is only after you get to know them better that you find out their true value. You learn that their standards are pretty low.

I'm sure none of you fellows fit this description, but I want you to be able to recognize the kind of boys I've described. I want you to realize that giving approval to their activities will make it appear that they are "big shots." This will eventually result in the weakening of your own character. If, however, you show your disapproval by refusing to listen to them or encourage their activities, this will strengthen you. Also, your example may show these boys the folly of their ways.

Ceremony: Turn to your neighbor, lay your right hand on his shoulder, and pray that God will keep him strong and sound.

THE MIRACLE OF A TREE

Setting: Boys gathered around a campfire, with trees in the background.

Items needed: A live branch and a withered branch.

(Point out a tree.) The tree is made up of four parts—the roots, the trunk, the branches, and the leaves. Each is important for the tree to live and bear fruit. The roots transport water and nourishment from the soil to the leaves, which manufacture food for growth. The tree is like a Christian, whose roots should be planted firmly in the Word from which his nourishment is received for growth (Psalm 1 and Isaiah 61:3).

What would happen if the leaves and branches did not receive any water and food by means of the roots? (They would wither.) This is what happens to the Christian who does not read God's Word. Do you want to be like this withered branch? (John 15:3, 4.)

A tree must be cared for and pruned or it will produce poor quality fruit or none at all. The Christian must carefully follow God's standards for growth or the result will be the same.

The fruit of a tree contains a seed (Word) which, when planted (sown in another's heart), begins to grow into a new plant, and so on. The plant's life cycle continues in the spiritual realm as in the natural.

The annual life cycle of a fruit tree—including the dormant phase, the reviving of life again through buds and leaves, the blossoming, and fruit-bearing—parallels the phases of the Christian experience. The dormant phase (winter phase) shows the believer's death to self and the flesh, and the rising again unto life for God. The old life and nature are still there, but the new life takes over. Now the Christian begins to grow, and with the continuance of growth shows evidence of new life (buds and growth rings).

Blossoming shows the beauty and fragrance of the Christian, while the fruit shows the fruitfulness which is the aim of a fuller life unto God. Isn't it amazing how God designed the plants and trees to illustrate spiritual aspects of life—what planning and forethought He put into Creation!

The tree's ability to withstand years of pounding rain, wind, and ice demonstrates its durability and strength. This illustrates the Christian's strength received from God to withstand the trials, temptations, problems, and storms of life.

The trees provide a haven and shelter for the birds and animals. Likewise, the Christian is sometimes helpful to others with comfort, support, and prayer in times of difficulty and need.

Most trees stand as a picture of spectacular beauty, perfect peace, and stillness—full of sustaining life within, yet providing so much satisfaction and refreshment for God's other creatures. This is God's wish for every Christian (Revelation 22:2). Is God's desire being manifested in you and your life?

Ceremony: One Scripture I read says the righteous are like trees planted by streams of water. As we bow our heads in prayer, let's ask God to help each of us to grow into that range of maturity.

UNMASKING TIME

Items needed: Several Halloween masks.

Scripture: Matthew 10:26: "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known."

This is the time of witches and black cats, goblins and spooks, of jack-o'-lanterns and trick or treats. You boys have been busy, I know, planning what you are going to dress in for your Halloween fun. Maybe you have saved up for a cowboy suit, or you plan to be a tramp. Probably all of you have made a trip to the store for masks to wear when you go out to trick or treat in the neighborhood from door to door, knocking loudly, calling out "Trick or treat." They

will listen to your voice (but of course you will change it to fool them). They will judge you by your size, and try to peer around your mask. If you are really good you will fool them, and when you take off your mask they will gasp in surprise and say, "I never guessed it was you."

Did you know that some people wear masks and try to fool people throughout the whole year? For example:

A. Some people wear a mask called "respectability." They are good on the outside, but on the inside there is a heart full of sin.

B. Others wear a mask called "good works." They try to win favor by doing things for people. Still underneath, their heart is full of sin.

C. Some even wear the mask called "church membership." They think this will please God, but underneath there still is sin.

Fellows, masks won't hide your sins or mine. We may fool some people some or all of the time, but you cannot fool yourself and you can never, never fool God.

Ceremony: Stand in a circle holding hands with the lights out. Place the Bible in the center of the circle with a flashlight spot on it. Pray and ask God to keep the light of His Word in every heart.

WE MUST "FEED" THE FIRE

Items needed: Six small sticks (1½ inch diameter by 5 or 6 inches long) and two or three small logs.

After the evening camp-out meal, when the dishes are cleaned and put away, gather the boys around the camp-fire. The fire should, by this time, be a small one, with just a few flames burning around the coals from the large fire that was made for the cooking of the evening meal.

Explain to the boys that the flames represent our hearts; the sticks represent the Word of God; the logs represent the Holy Spirit. Without God's Word, our hearts grow dimmer and tend to get cold. When we hear the Word of God, our hearts flare up to send forth light and the warmth of love. When the logs (Holy Spirit) are placed

within our flames (hearts), the fire flares up and sends forth much light and heat—enough to cook the evening meal (our testimony for Christ).

Ceremony: Join hands in a circle, around the campfire, and sing the Doxology from *Royal Rangers Campfire Songs*.

BRANDING IRONS

Item needed: A branding iron.

Purpose: To show boys the need for keeping close to the Lord.

Story: I don't suppose that any of you has ever had the opportunity to use the object for today, but all of you know that this is a branding iron, and some of you may have seen one used. Its purpose is to mark animals so they can be identified. We're going to let it represent everyone here that is a Christian—that is, everyone who has accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour.

In order for this iron to be used it has to be hot, and I will have to put it near the fire so it will get warm. Just so, the Christian boy who wants to be used by the Lord has to be warm. How does a Christian get warm? Not by being put in a fire, but rather by being close to the Lord Jesus Christ. You boys should talk to the Lord Jesus every day in prayer, and you must read the Bible so that you will be close to Him.

Fire makes the iron hot. God wants us to be as much on fire as the ember, otherwise, if we fail to read the Bible and pray, we become as dead ashes.

Notice that this iron is no good to me cold, and that is just as true of you if you are a cold Christian. Are you reading your Bible? Are you praying to the Lord regularly? The Lord wants to use each of you, but He can't if you are a cold Christian. So let's remember to be regular in doing things so that we won't be cold, useless Christians, but warm, useful Christians for our Saviour.

Ceremony: Let's pray and ask the Lord to keep us on fire for Him.

DON'T BE A WRECK

Imagine for a moment that we are in an automobile wrecking yard. What do we see? We see broken, wrecked, distorted automobiles. In one sense, this is a graveyard for cars. It is a place where automobiles have come to the end of their usefulness.

Do you know that the life of an automobile, in a way, parallels a human life? Think a moment. When a car starts its life it's new and shiny—full of energy and power. We, too, begin life like that. We are born new and clean—full of vitality and raring to go. When a car is well taken care of, it can be a wonderful thing. If we change the oil regularly, have checkups, replace plugs, and so on, our car will give us long and faithful service. But if we neglect it, what happens? It becomes just a headache—something of no value at all which eventually ends up in the scrap heap or, as I said before, the graveyard of automobiles.

We, too, as human beings can live a full, useful life by letting God take the controls of our lives. With Jesus as the Master Mechanic of our souls, we are assured of a smooth, efficient-running life.

However, there are many people in prisons, mental institutions, and alcoholic and drug wards who allowed Satan to ruin their lives. Don't you end up on the scrap heap!

Ceremony: Fellows, there are body companies that can fix up wrecks, but a keen eye can detect the repairs. And while Jesus can repair wrecked lives, it's better to serve Him now and *avoid* being a wreck. Let's join hands and pray for one another that none of us will end up in the scraps.

HOW TALL ARE YOU?

Item needed: Have the Rangers bring a tape measure or some kind of rule for measuring height or length.

Purpose: To encourage Rangers to become conscious of their growth in Jesus Christ.

Story: The story is told of the little boy who came to

his mother and said, "Mom, I'm nine feet tall."

"How do you know you are nine feet tall?" the mother asked.

"I measured myself with my own ruler," he answered. Upon investigation, the mother found a little stick that the boy had used. It was his own measurement guide. She measured and compared his with the standard measurement and found the difference.

Discussion: Let the boys comment on their own growth or the growth of a younger or older brother or sister.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-13. Paul the apostle speaks and here writes to one of the churches telling them of the Holy Spirit ministries to the members of the church. He explains the reason for them and their importance in the body of Christ. He then ends the direct explanation with this statement: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the *measure* of the stature of the fulness of Christ." It isn't how tall Jesus is physically; but it's growth in stature of purity, truthfulness, honesty, and Christlikeness that God wants.

Ceremony: Fellows, there's a gospel song that says, "When you're on your knees, you're taller than trees." Why don't we all kneel where we are and ask the Lord to help us grow in Him.

POSTHASTE

Purpose: To show the need for better witnessing—NOW!

Scripture: Romans 10:15: "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

Story: Did you ever stop to think how words originated? Let us take the term "posthaste," which indicates speed and rapidity. This particular term goes back to the time of King Henry VIII. During his reign, postmasters employed relays to carry messages throughout the English countryside. (In later years America's version was the "Pony Express.") It was the responsibility of each postmaster to

endorse the letters with the exact time the message reached his hands. The dispatchers were told to ride for their lives. This also had a very literal meaning. To delay the message of the sovereign could bring the penalty of hanging. As a matter of fact, correspondence in the 16th century was often ornamented with drawings of a poor dispatch carrier, suspended from the gallows. Beneath the figures was the admonition, "Post, haste!" Those laws lasted a number of years, and as a matter of fact, not until the 19th century was the statute revoked. The old expression, posthaste still lingers on.

You fellows know, spiritually speaking, our King, the Lord Jesus Christ, has given us a message that must be delivered to all men. The Bible reminds us forcefully that the King's business requires haste. The exhortation is, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." There's no death penalty involved, but rather rewards promised for faithfulness and obedience.

Ceremony: We have a great job to do for the Lord as Royal Rangers. It must be done posthaste! What's our motto? "READY!" If you're "ready" to get busy for our Master Ranger, stand up and repeat the Royal Rangers Code.

HOW TO RECEIVE BY GIVING

Preparation: A piece of cardboard 10 inches square, painted a bright red or golden color.

If I have two apples, and give one of them away, then I shall have only one apple. Yet in Christian living, just the opposite is true. When you pour out your love to others, you do not have less love, but more. A young man can love his mother and father dearly, but when he falls in love with a girl, he does not have less love for his parents. The more he loves his girl, the more he will love everybody else. If you do not love anybody but yourself, you will soon get to the place where you do not love yourself.

Now, if one of you boys will come here and help me, we shall see how this principle works. You see that this

card has only four corners. If I keep it all to myself, it will never have but four corners. I am going to cut this corner off and give it to you. Now how many corners do you have? You have three and I have five. I shall give you another corner. Now you have six and I have six. Now I shall give you another corner, and you have nine corners, and I have seven. Now I shall give you another corner. You will have 12, and I have eight corners. I have twice as many corners as I had when I started, and you have three times as many. But if I had kept all the corners to myself, I never would have had but four, and you would not have had any.

So in living for Jesus, the more of your life you give away in service, the more you are going to have to give away, and the more you will have left to enjoy.

Ceremony: Let's stand and repeat our Royal Rangers Pledge.

NATURE'S RAIN CYCLE

Purpose: To show the boys that we should work together for God.

Setting: Somewhere in the out-of-doors.

This is a great place for camping isn't it, fellows? The landscape is nice and green, and the air smells just great, doesn't it? Do you know what makes it so green and nice out here? It is nature's rain cycle. It begins with the clouds dropping water in the form of rain. The trees, flowers, grass, and plants soak up the rain. The water that is left over runs into streams and ends up in a lake. Here it begins to evaporate into vapors. The trees, flowers, grass, and other plants also give off vapors. These vapors are drawn up into the clouds and the cycle begins again.

This is the way God provides water for plant life. If the grass or the trees or the lakes kept all the water themselves, there would be no water for the clouds, and hence no more rain.

There is a good spiritual lesson here. God has given us the living water (Salvation). He expects us to share it with

others by witnessing for Him. If we fail to do this, God's plan for the world will be hindered.

Ceremony: Let us kneel here by the campfire and thank Him for the living water.

A HARD-BOILED PRISONER

Items needed: A milk bottle and a hard-boiled egg. Remove shell of the egg and grease the egg so it will slide easily. Rinse the bottle with very hot water and quickly place the egg into the mouth of the bottle. Suction will draw the egg into the bottle. (Do this before devotion.) Keep bottle in a paper sack and out of sight until later.

Story: Did you fellows know that tonight we have with us a prisoner? That's right. There is a hard-boiled prisoner right here in this room (pause and then present bottle with egg in it). This egg is a prisoner in this bottle (shake bottle, turn upside down, and shake some more). No matter how hard it tries it cannot get out.

This reminds me of when Peter was in prison. However, Peter was not hard-boiled. He was a kind, Christian man and was unjustly imprisoned. It seemed that Peter would never be able to get out because Herod had placed a special guard over him. But Herod forgot one thing; and that was that God answers prayer. That night, while Peter was sleeping, an angel came and delivered him.

Someone has said that prayer is the Christian's breath. And this gives me an idea on how to get Mr. Egg out of his prison. (Place mouth to bottle and blow. Before removing mouth turn bottle upside down so that egg falls into neck of bottle. Compressed air will force egg out.)

Rangers, you may never be in prison as Peter was, but there will be problems in your life that can be solved only with prayer.

Ceremony: Let's exercise the privilege of prayer right now! Then we'll know how to pray when problems come our way.

READ THE INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose: To encourage boys to read God's Word.

A lady once had a large stain on her living room rug. While shopping one day, she found a jar labeled "Spot and Stain Remover." She brought it home and rubbed it all over the stain. It didn't seem to be doing the job so she put the jar away, thinking she had wasted her money when she bought it.

The next morning she saw that the stain was indeed gone, but she wasn't at all happy about it. Where the stain had been, she now had a large, ragged hole, and under the hole in the rug the floor was badly discolored.

Only then did she decide to read the instructions on the jar; but, of course, it was too late. If she had read the instructions first, she would have known that the cleaner was intended to be mixed with water, and not to be used full strength as she had used it. Also, she would have known what to do if some of the fluid had accidentally spilled on the rug before water was added. Because she did not read the instructions first, the rug was ruined.

Fellows, there is a Book of instructions that has been written to help us. With these instructions we can know how to use our lives, how to make corrections when we make mistakes, and even how to remove stains without ruining our lives.

These instructions will do us no good if we do not follow them. Before we can follow them, we must read them. Part of the Rangers Code says, "A Royal Ranger is spiritual. He prays, reads the Bible, and witnesses." If you are living up to the Rangers Code, you are already reading God's instruction Book. If you are not, let's begin tonight by promising God that you will start reading His Word everyday and ask Him to help you to understand His instructions.

Ceremony: Those who will promise to read the Bible each day and pray to the Lord for understanding, please raise your hand with me. Fine! Now, let's pray.

GOD'S GREATNESS

Purpose: To show each boy God's greatness.

Items needed: If desired, a picture of a squid, a bat, and a bird gliding or in flight.

Story: Royal Rangers, all of you boys are well aware of God as your personal Saviour, but did you know what a great scientist and engineer He is? You no doubt can think of many events that have occurred in the last few years and wonder what the Lord has done that could compare with some of these. Tonight we will compare two major events that have occurred which I am sure we have all seen or heard about.

The first we will cover very quickly, the atomic bomb. We all know the tremendous power of such a device and how man worked so hard and so long to develop it—or did man really develop it? If you read carefully, you will see it says man unleashed the power of the atom. Let me ask you, "Who put the power there?" We all know the answer: God made the power of the atom.

Now, the second event. The whole world watched and listened when John Glenn was launched into orbit around the earth. Men on earth were in constant contact with him and knew exactly where he was at all times. Finally, he returned to earth and was picked up safely.

What has God done to match these things of man? The principle of the rocket is new to us, but not to God. The squid of the sea has used this same method of propulsion for thousands of years and does so today as its method of travel.

Our radar pinpointed Glenn all during his orbit, and again, radar is a fairly new device to us, but not to God. Bats for centuries have used a form of radar to guide them in their flight at night.

Glenn returned to earth by gliding down in a parachute. God's creatures of many types and for countless years have had ability to move about.

I can see some doubts in your minds that these examples are not quite the same in greatness. You are very wrong. God created man and gave man the very mind that

thought of all of these things and all the things to come.

Ceremony: Rangers, tonight we shall pray to our God for His guidance, for the strength and wisdom we shall need throughout our lives to be true Christians, to lead us to help our fellowman and make our minds think of the Christian way to accomplish the tasks set before us.

MEETING THE CREATOR

Purpose: To show that the God who created the earth and all of its splendor and majesty is the same God who gave His life for us and lives within our hearts.

Setting: The boys should be seated around the campfire. While this devotion could be given indoors, it will have a greater effect if given at a camp-out surrounded by God's handiwork.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."
"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so."

Fellows, as we sit here beneath these giant trees we become aware of God's creative powers. God is a wonderful Creator. He created everything just right.

How many plants do you think God created? Our encyclopedias tell us there are more than 300,000 different kinds. Some are so tiny you cannot see them without a microscope, and some of them are huge, just like these trees.

God did not make plants just to fill up space. He created them for beauty and usefulness. Wouldn't this be a dreary world without flowers or greenery?

As we sit around our campfire tonight, let's pause for a moment and think about this great God who created the world and all its beauty. It takes a big God to create a world. Yet tonight this same God is small enough to live within our hearts.

God said to us in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and

he with me." What does He mean when He says He is standing at the door knocking? He means simply that He is ready and waiting to come into your heart and to abide there if you will open the door of your heart.

Wouldn't you like for this great God of the universe to come into your heart and become your Saviour tonight? He will come in if you will simply open the door and ask Him.

Ceremony: Close by having the boys bow their heads and pray, asking Jesus the mighty Creator to come into their hearts and become their Saviour as well as Creator.

LIVING LIFE STRAIGHT

Purpose: To emphasize the need to live a clean, Christian life.

Items needed: Two 4-foot long $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch ropes and a knife.

Commander: This rope (holding up one of the ropes by one end) represents a person's life: his birth, childhood, youth, manhood, old age, and death (moving the hand down the rope to illustrate advancing age). I want to tell you a tragic story about a young man who really tied his life (raising the rope) into knots.

When John was just a boy about your age, he disobeyed his Christian parents and hung around with a group of unsaved boys who coaxed him into helping them steal some petty items from a neighborhood store. How many of the Ten Commandments did John break?

Answer: Two—he disobeyed his parents and he stole.

Commander: He committed at least two sins (tie two knots in the rope, about 6 inches from top end). Well, it wasn't long before the boys, John included, had moved on to bigger sins. By the time John was 18 years old, he had helped rob a filling station, beaten up and robbed an old man, and stolen a car (tie three more knots in the rope). John's worldly friends convinced him that he was a sissy if he didn't smoke and drink (tie two more knots). One night when John was driving home from a "night on the town" with his friends, he lost control of his car, hit an

oncoming car head on, and was killed (cut the rope off just below the last knot). Now, fellows, what happened to the rope every time I tied a knot?

Answer: It got shorter.

Commander: (Compare the knotted, cut rope with the new straight one.) Which rope would you like to represent your life?

Answer: The long one.

Commander: Do you know that God tells us in the Bible how our lives can be like the long, straight rope? (Read Deuteronomy 5:16 and Psalm 91:1, 16.) Every time we disobey God's laws we tie a knot in the rope of our lives. If we obey Him and live according to His laws, we are promised a long, happy life. Wouldn't you fellows like to "live life straight" and have the assurance that God is caring for you?

Ceremony: Before your life gets all knotted up, take Jesus into your heart. Invite Him to come in as we pray.

KEEP THE CANDLE BURNING

Purpose: To show the importance of living up to the three parts of the Rangers Pledge.

Item needed: A lighted candle.

Rangers, here you see a plain, ordinary candle—a candle such as the one we use when we induct new boys into our outpost.

This candle needs three things to keep it burning—it needs heat, fuel, and oxygen. The heat was provided by the match I used to start it burning. The fuel is the melted wax which is absorbed by the wick. The oxygen comes from the air around us.

If we remove any one of these three things, the candle will go out. If there is no heat, the wax will not melt. If the wax doesn't melt, the wick cannot absorb the fuel. And, if the air is cut off, the candle will soon go out.

In much the same way, fellows, you and I need three things to be the kind of Rangers we should be. When you, as a Royal Ranger, took the Royal Rangers Pledge, you

promised to do these three things. You pledged that with God's help you will:

1. Do your best to serve God, your church, and your fellowman.

2. To live by the Rangers Code.

3. To make the Golden Rule your daily rule.

Fellows, we need to do each of these three things to make our lives meaningful and to be lights for Jesus, just as the candle needs heat, fuel, and oxygen to do its job of spreading light.

Remember, if we fail in one of the parts, we are not performing our tasks as we should, and our light will either go out or be ineffective.

Ceremony: If you want to keep the candle of your testimony burning, stand with me and let's repeat together the Royal Rangers Pledge.

COLLECTING THINGS

Scripture: Psalms 24:1; 106:16.

Many teen-agers are collectors of rocks, butterflies, Indian relics, and stamps. Others make valuable collections of coins and foreign dolls. Many have made quite a collection of records and photographs. Each of these collections means much to the collector.

There are other collections we can make that have a value we can never really measure. It is fun and it also enriches our lives. Here are some ideas for such collections.

COLLECTING SMILES: Try it for just one day. You'll be so pleased with your collection that you will want to keep right on collecting. Of course, to collect smiles you have to smile at others first.

You start with the first person you meet when you get up in the morning and keep on throughout the day. Sometimes people will not smile back. It may be they are too tired or worried or sick. Or maybe they are just so surprised at seeing you smile that they don't respond right away. But keep right on smiling and sooner or later you will get some smiles for your collection. The smiles that are the hardest to

get will be the ones you will prize the most.

COLLECTING BEAUTIFUL SCENES: This is not something you can put in a scrapbook, but something you can file away in your memory. It is something you can turn to and enjoy when things are going badly or that you can enjoy in moments of quietness. If you have a collector's eye, you will find all sorts of things: tiny frost crystals on windows, the lace of bare, black branches against a red sunset, tall grass shimmering in the sun, white clouds reflected in a pond. There is a wealth of beauty around us just waiting to be collected.

COLLECTING PLEASANT SOUNDS: It can be a redbird's song in the dead of winter, or it can be the soft lap-lap of waves on the shoreline in summer. It might be the high, clear notes of the meadowlark across a wheat field, or it might be the symphony of insects at night when everything is quiet. Sort out the beautiful sounds from the ones you've grown accustomed to, such as those of automobiles, airplanes, radios, and televisions. Keep these sounds and store them away. There will be many times when you can turn to your collection as a source of enjoyment.

Ceremony: Let's sing together a song from *Royal Rangers Campfire Songs*, "I See God."

EAGER BEAVER

Scripture: Isaiah 59:10.

Out in Arizona two dams are being built. One will stand and the other will fall. One is being constructed by government engineers harnessing the mighty Colorado River. It is the huge Canyon dam and when it is finished, it will have cost 421 million dollars.

Just 100 feet below this tremendous project, another dam is being built. An Associated Press story tells how a single beaver is hard at work building a dam across the now almost dry stream bed. He works hard all day long carrying driftwood, mud, and twigs, but all of his efforts are doomed, as the mighty Colorado River will be redirected and the little beaver dam will be swept away.

Isn't this like the efforts of men in this world? They work hard to build up a dam of securities, stocks, bonds, and money, often at the sacrifice of time that should be spent with families and in unselfish service. After they lay up enough security, they are considered successes.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"
Are you an eager beaver?

Ceremony: Let's not be like the foolish beaver. You just can't make it alone. Let's unite our hearts in prayer and ask for God's help always!

SEARCH YOUR POCKETS

When you travel into another country, such as Mexico or Canada, you have to stop and have your bags searched just before entering the country. There are some things they do not wish to have brought into their country. England does not allow dogs to be smuggled in. Sometimes people try to hide articles or little animals in their baggage in an attempt to carry them into a foreign country. But if they are caught they get into serious trouble.

Sometimes we who are Christians try to smuggle things into our minds and hearts (which might be called pockets), and try to pretend that the Lord is unaware of them; but always remember that He does know and He is terribly offended with such conduct.

Let's look at some of the things we try to hide in the pockets of our minds and hearts. (1) **SELFISHNESS:** This is something that God considers very wrong. (2) **LAZINESS:** Proverbs 6:6; 10:26; 26:16. (3) **TEMPER:** This is often a hidden thing which should be completely yielded to God (Psalm 37:8; Proverbs 15:1; 16:32).

When we carry a lot of things in our pockets too long, they cause a hole to develop in the lining, and we drop things through them unknowingly. This causes embarrassment on our part sometimes. This also brings embarrassment when the things we hide in the pockets of our mind and heart are exposed before our friends and the Lord. The best thing to do is to keep the pockets mended and

keep as many of the wrong things out as possible. When a hole appears in your pocket, the only thing to do is go right away to the one person who knows how to mend it properly—Mother. You trust her ability with a needle and thread.

Likewise, when the pockets of our minds and hearts need mending, we must take them to the very One who knows how to mend them—the Lord Jesus Christ. We can go to Him in prayer, promising Him that we will consecrate our minds, hearts, and lives to Him. In faith we pray and serve Him. Then He gladly mends the holes in our minds and hearts.

Ceremony: Possibly some of you would like to talk about some of these things, and then afterwards we'll kneel together and pray about them.

HOW STRONG ARE YOU?

Item needed: A spool of thread.

Story: Buckaroos, tonight we're going to see how strong we are. Who thinks he's the strongest? Well, we'll soon determine just how strong you really are by a very simple test. I want each one of you to take a piece of this thread and wrap it around the four fingers of your left hand. That's right, wrap it around about one time, then let's see if you're strong enough to break it.

Fine, I see that nearly everyone is strong enough to break that one piece of thread. But let's see what happens if I change things a little bit. John, come on over here and let me demonstrate on you, okay? We'll see how strong you are, John. Boys, I'll do it a little differently this time. I'm going to wrap about 15 strands of thread around John's fingers. I'll tie them up good and firm, using the same thread as before, only this time a lot more of it.

Okay, John, see if you can break all that thread. You can't? I didn't think you could, either! Buckaroos, did you see what has happened? When I took the same thread and wrapped it around his fingers *many* times, it could not be broken, no matter how hard he tried!

Buckaroos, sins are like fine, thin strands of thread. They

wrap themselves around your soul one at a time. But when many sins, even the so-called "small" sins, wrap themselves around your soul, you'll soon discover that you are "bound" by sins—you are in their grip and you cannot break free!

Let's remember this, fellows: Don't let even one sin wrap itself around your soul. If you do sin, go to Jesus immediately and ask forgiveness and get that ugly sin out of your life—*then* you'll be free from the bondage of sin and you'll be able to live a good life for Jesus.

Ceremony: Let's bow our heads and ask the Lord to keep us strong in Him.

MAKE THE BEST OF IT

Story: John Masfield, an English poet, tells a little story about an English nobleman who was forced to move out of his castle because the taxes were so high he could no longer pay them. All the associations and memories of his family for generations were bound up in the old house. He did not want to move, but did. He took a humble little house somewhere and threw the estate open to the public. People were permitted to see what a castle looked like by paying a few cents. So many people came that after a while their fees paid the taxes and the man was able to move into his home again.

The story reminds us that mishaps come into the lives of all of us, but good can come from the most embarrassing circumstances if we will be brave and take the right attitude.

Ceremony: In offering our benediction, let us take our Bibles and read Psalm 121:5-8. Let us read together with bowed heads. "The Lord is thy keeper . . . The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."

A TREE

Purpose: To show where each boy fits into the plan of God.

Item needed: A small tree.

Scripture: Psalm 1.

Use the small tree to illustrate the fact that we are all important members of the family of God, that everything around us helps to fulfill God's plan.

Make the following comparisons:

1. The roots represent the foundation of the Church, by which we are grounded in Christ.
2. The trunk represents the physical church.
3. The limbs represent the different denominations.
4. The leaves represent each member of a local body, without which the tree would die.
5. The air (oxygen) and rain represent good and necessary outside influences.
6. Wind and fire represent destructive outside influences.
7. Diseases represent satanic forces.
8. The sun represents the power of God, without which no life could exist.

Ceremony: Encourage the boys to stand straight, be well grounded in the Word of God, and let His light make them productive.

DO YOU KNOW GOD?

When Mark Twain, the famous author, was touring Europe with his wife and daughter Clarice, they met a great many notable people. They were invited to the palace of the King of England; they dined with the President of France; and they were asked to visit the German Emperor. Mark Twain's little girl was greatly impressed and she said to her father, "Soon there won't be anybody left for you to get acquainted with except God."

That is the way with a lot of people. They like to meet important officials such as the mayor of the city, the governor of the state, and the President of our country, but they fail to get acquainted with the Lord, who is greater than any of these.

If we have not done so already, let us make it our aim to get acquainted with God.

We read about Him in the Bible, and know that He created the world and placed man here on earth. We know that He causes the sun to rise and set, the rain to fall, and the plants to grow in order that we may have food. We know of His love in sending Jesus into the world to die on the cross for our sins, and to be raised from the dead that we might have certainty of life everlasting. We have learned many things about Him, yet many of us really do not know Him.

How do you come to know anyone? Not just by seeing a person. Let us suppose that a new boy moved into your neighborhood. You learn his name, you see him walk past the house on the way to school or ride his bike up and down the street, you recognize him, but still you do not know him. Now, how are you going to become acquainted with him? You must talk with him. This is also the way you become acquainted with God.

Ceremony: There may be someone here who has never met the Lord. Come stand in front and let me introduce you to Him.

ANSWER YOUR CALL

Scripture: Mark 3:13-19.

Introduction and Story: There are many different kinds of calls. Maybe someone will call you long-distance to wish you a happy birthday or to tell you some news, either good or bad. Businessmen make many calls in order to take care of their business. Hunters use game calls to lure animals to them by calling them in their own call.

When a house is on fire, the firemen are called. When there is sickness in the home, the doctor is called. When the plumbing doesn't work, the plumber is called. If there is an accident, an ambulance is called. If you are having a big, big dinner, company is called. These are all different kinds of calls.

Jesus gave some calls too. He saw Matthew sitting at his work and called him to follow. He saw some fishermen, James and John, in a boat mending their nets. He called to them, and they followed Him. Andrew saw Jesus, and then

he went and called his brother Peter. Together they followed Christ.

Jesus calls in many ways. Those who have not accepted Him, He calls to come and have their sins washed away. To those who do know Him, He calls and says, "Go into all the world." Have you heard His call? Have you obeyed?

What would happen if the firemen would not come when you called them, or the doctor refused to give you his attention when you called him? What if the ambulance would not come when you placed that call? What will happen if we do not obey the call of Jesus? Jesus said in Matthew 4:19, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Ceremony: Have you answered the call our Lord has made to you? If you haven't, there will never be a better time than right now!





