

## **“Come and See”**

### *a sermon outline suggestion for Camp Sunday*

- I. Our Church Camps are a gift from God.
  - A. A gift is something you receive because you are loved.
    1. Share an example of a gift you received from a loved one.
  - B. What are the gifts of camp?
    1. An opportunity to meet Jesus or take another step in our faith journeys.
    2. A place to connect with other Christians.
    3. A place to experience and connect with the outdoors.
  
- II. Have you seen these gifts lately?
  - A. John 1:43-50 tells the story of two men, who later became disciples, coming to see Jesus.
    1. Tell the story of the scripture.
  - B. There is something powerful about seeing.
    1. Some people say, “I’ll believe it when I see it.”
    2. You’ve also heard the old saying, “seeing is believing.”
    3. This morning, we’d like to show you two pictures of the gift of camp so that you might see and understand.
  
- III. Camp is, of course, for kids. (if you have pictures of your own or pictures of you camp, replace this section with your own stories)
  - A. Here is a picture of Alia.
    1. She stands next to the cross at Camp Sawtooth, our camp located in the Sawtooth Mountains, 25 miles from the nearest electrical line and cell phone tower, in Central Idaho.
    2. If you do not know about Camp Sawtooth, you may be surprised to learn that it only operates during the summer. During the winter, the site is covered by several feet of snow.
    3. In the late Spring, Dave Hargraves, our camp manager snowmobiles into camp to assess how the buildings survived the winter. Often, major repairs have to be done to cabins.
    4. Camp Sawtooth is our most remote camp; it is located 30 miles north of Fairfield, ID, a town of about 300. Most people have never been as far off the “grid” as they are at camp. Last summer the camp had a resident bear.
  - B. Alia stands at the cross, which is a good expression of what camp has done for her.
    1. While Alia has grown up in church, often attending Sunday School, her family is busy on the weekends.
    2. One week a year, Alia attends camp and reconnects with her faith. While the family often misses church and there often isn’t time for Sunday school, Alia has a chance each year to remember what she believe and in whom she has her faith.
    3. At one time during the week, the tradition at Sawtooth is that there will be a hike to the cross. The hike takes a couple of hours and gains nearly 1000 feet in altitude. You can see the camp far below the cross in  the picture.
    4. For many campers, this hike is the hardest physical thing they do at camp, and some do nothing harder during the year.
  - C. Going to the cross is hard work.

1. Many of our campers are friends of church kids. Some campers have no church affiliation at all.
2. Going to the cross – this is to say, meeting Jesus – is hard work, cross-cultural work for many campers.
3. Camp gives the gift of Jesus to many children and teens as they learn what it means to go to the cross.

IV. Camp is not just for kids. Camp is also for adults.

A. Here is a picture of grandparents at “Grand Camp.”

1. Grand Camp is a successful program at two of our sites, Magruder and Sawtooth.

2. It is an opportunity for grandparents to take their grandchildren to camp.

3. Many of these children live out of state and have limited time with their grandparents.

B. Grand Camp has all the camp elements one would expect.

1. Grand Camp has s’mores, hikes, campfires, bible stories, crafts and time to play.

2. In addition to all these great “camp things,” Grand Camp gives grandparents an opportunity to meet their grandchildren.

3. Children – even little ones – often spend their week in piano lessons, dance lessons, soccer practice, homework and being with their friends. Time with grandparents – even if the grandparents live nearby – is often squeezed out.

4. Grand Camp is the antidote to these busy times. It’s a time when grandparents can do fun things with grandchildren and participate in their lives.

C. Grand Camp is not our only adult event.

1. Throughout the year, our camps host retreats, choir camps, hand bell camps, craft camps, bread baking camps, prayer retreats, and countless other adult events.

2. If you think camp is only for children, you have not been out to see.

V. You are invited to come and see camp.

A. Just as Nathaniel saw and believed, you can, too.

1. Nathaniel was converted from his hum-drum life, his life of searching for real meaning, when he followed his friend Philip to meet Jesus.

2. This friend – Philip – invited Nathaniel to see the world in a different way and love someone, and something, far more important than the loves of this world.

3. Nathaniel, by seeing Jesus, was converted to new life.

B. We don’t presume to suggest your world will be transformed as Nathaniel’s was when he met Jesus by coming to camp.

1. We do, however, believe that if you could see the variety of our camps, you would see your ministry in this church differently.

2. You may think that your church’s ministry – the transformation of the world that your church does – stops at the door of your church, or maybe at the edge of your community.

3. This is not, however, true.

4. Through YOUR camp ministry, you are helping to change lives throughout Oregon, Idaho, and the world.

5. Those children who come to camp? They’re often from around our state or from somewhere else.

6. Those grandparents who come to camp? They’re from everywhere.

- C. And you are a part of this camp ministry.
  - 1. Your support makes camp possible.
  - 2. You gave the gifts to make camp happen. Thank you!
- D. And come see what is going on at camp.
  - 1. You'll be surprised!
  - 2. You'll be cheered to know that all sorts of children are going to the cross.
  - 3. You'll be blessed by the way adults are deepening their faith.
  - 4. As Philip said to Nathaniel, we say to you: "come and see."