**Contemplative Journey Events**

**Journey #1: Heaven and Hell**

Set up two rooms – one as hell and one as heaven. If possible, use to stairways to access each room so that you can refer to the choice we make in life to end up on one of two destinations.

In the hell stairwell (switch off the lights and user candle lighting if possible) consider using Top 40 song names as indicators of the steps that lead to hell. In the third week of January 2009 we used the following song titles – writing each one on a piece of A3 paper and sticking them to the wall on the way up the stairs:

\* I wanna make love in the club – Usher

\* Womanizer – Britney Spears

\* I’m a heart breaker – Will.I.Am

\* Touch my body – Mariah Carey

\* I don’t care – Fall Out Boy

\* Get the party started – Pink

\* I’m a man eater – Nellie Furtado

\* Heartless – Kanye West

\* I kissed a girl and I liked it – Kelly Perry

In the heaven stairwell use words of Jesus like the one below – written on A3 paper and stuck on the wall:

\* Repent – Jesus

\* Believe – Jesus

\* Be baptized – Jesus

\* Make me Lord – Jesus

\* Worship me – Jesus

\* Love my people – Jesus

\* Honour your parents – Jesus

\* Love your enemies – Jesus

The heaven room should be a cool, inviting room. Teens are met at the door by a person dressed in white and ushered into heaven. They are seated, while worship music plays in the background, and treated with juice and biscuits. At some point worship dancers invite teens to gather around the throne to worship God. Use scripture readings from the book of Revelation that relate to this heavenly scene.

The hell room should be as hot as possible with an unpleasant smell. Teens are greeted at the door by a devil dressed in a suit who is initially pleasant, but the moment they are in the room, which is dark, had evil images projected on the walls (using pics or videos), the devil changes and treats them really rough and offensively – calling them maggots and other derogatory words. They are reminded of their sins on earth, name tags placed on their tops describing their crimes. They are made to be push ups with weights around their necks – we used socks filled with stones tied to string. They then have to do some work that is not meaningful – we made them stack and straighted chairs. They are then “treated” to refreshments – tomato cocktail, salt water and some uncooked wors is laid out on the table and other items that would not readily be eaten like raw onion, etc.

Depending on the size of the group it may be necessary to divide the large group into smaller groups and rotate the groups through the two rooms. We allowed 20 minutes for each room experience and used two groups of 25 kids at a time.

At the end of the night, when both groups have made their way through both heaven and hell, we all gathered at the bottom of the 2 stairwells and using the wide door and the narrow door the wrap up spoke about how what we do in this life echoes in Eternity (drawing from the Gladiator movie scene). We decide in this life where we spend eternity – there are only two possible locations. Satan tries to do a publics relations job to get us to believe that when we die we are finished – ie. There is no life after death – but that is a lie.

Share the story from Luke 1:19-31 about the rich man and Lazarus and how the rich man pleased with Lazarus pleased with Abraham to send someone to warn his family members about landing up in the place of torment.

Speak about how Christ has made the way possible for us to spend eternity in heaven – we are called to repent, believe and be baptised.

A good scripture to refer to is: Matthew 7:13-14 – the wide and narrow door that leads to destruction or heaven.

**Journey #2: Jonah**

**Setup:** Using masking tape, mark out Israel, the Mediterranean sea, Joppa, Tarshish and Nineveh. Mark out the boat and the whale. Print a ticket for each person. Set aside an area for people to sit outside the city of Nineveh.

**Supplies:** A marshmallow fish for each person, a sour worm for each person, a green leaf and a dry leaf (crushable) for each person, cardboard boxes, a candle to light.

**Worship:** Songs that focus on giving praise to God

Today we are going on a journey – the same journey that Jonah went on. If you allow yourself to become part of his story you will find help for your own spiritual journey!

**Jonah 1**

**The Call from God**

*1One day long ago, God's Word came to Jonah, Amittai's son: 2"Up on your feet and on your way to the big city of Nineveh! Preach to them. They're in a bad way and I can't ignore it any longer."*

You are Jonah, the son of Amittai, a prophet from Gath in Israel. God had appointed you to speak on his behalf during the reign of Jeroboam, the King of Israel 760 years BC. This was the century during which Assyria took Israel into captivity. You were one of the leaders among the "schools of the prophets" when Elisha was nearing the end of his ministry. One day God spoke to you – God initiated the encounter and gave you a clear directive – go to a city known for their immoral behavior, and preach to them – warning them to repent and convert to God's ways.

You are going to reflect on Isaiah 6:1-9 and when you sense that God has said something to you through the passage, go and write it on the paper provided.

**Activity:** Youth reflect on Isaiah 6:1-9 (read and on the screen), hear God speak to them through it and get up and write it on paper.

**Activity:** A leader lights a candle while youth write.

What a privilege to be a prophet –you can’t wait to get to Nineveh to preach God’s Word!

**Jonah’s Response to God’s Call**

*3But Jonah got up and went the other direction to Tarshish, running away from God.*

**Activity:** (1) Walk to **Joppa.** (2) Brainstorm things that lead us away from God. (3) Blow out the candle.

Why did you run away from God? What was it about God’s call that made you go in the opposite direction? Was it: Fear? Prejudice? Pride? You knew God? This was it!!! You knew God was a merciful God, and that if Nineveh cried to God and repented, the Assyrians would be spared – you wanted them to die.

How could God be calling you to preach to the Ninevites? They were wicked! They were Assyrians – enemies of israel. They were the Nazis of those days who showed no pity to their captives. They would hold them down, reach into their mouths and pull their tongue out by the roots. Victims were skinned alive, and their skins stretched out on the walls. In every city they conquered, they built a pyramid of human skulls.

What is God calling you to do for him that might tempt you to run in the opposite direction? Jonah got into a boat to get away from God. Can you think of someone who has really hurt you, who if they came to know the Lord and were forgiven of their sins, you would be really annoyed? Maybe you've practically prayed, "Lord, I don't want them to get off that easy. I want them to pay for their sin." Well, they are not getting off that easy. Remember, their sin cost the Lord His life. Also, if you want people to pay for their sins, be consistent. You'll have to be willing to pay for your sin!

*3He went down to the port of Joppa and found a ship headed for Tarshish. He paid the fare and went on board, joining those going to Tarshish-as far away from God**as he could get.*

**Activity:** Get each person to buy a ticket for the journey from you – they can pay with anything – but must pay something before they get into the boat.

When Jonah ran he had to buy a ticket. Running from God will always cost us something, and usually it is not something we get back. What you sow you shall reap. We all pay if we run. We could avoid so much hassle if we'd just go God's way in the first place. A perfect example is the prodigal son. He lost all his inheritance and his relationships.

**Activity:** Move into the place marked out as the boat and **stand** in the boat.

*4But God sent a huge storm at sea, the waves towering. The ship was about to break into pieces. The sailors were terrified. They called out in desperation to their gods. They threw everything they were carrying overboard to lighten the ship.*

**Activity:** Have youth throw boxes and anything else out of the boat.

*5Meanwhile, Jonah had gone down into the hold of the ship to take a nap. He was sound asleep. 6The captain came to him and said, "What's this? Sleeping! Get up! Pray to your god! Maybe your god will see we're in trouble and rescue us." 7Then the sailors said to one another, "Let's get to the bottom of this. Let's draw straws to identify the culprit on this ship who's responsible for this disaster." So they drew straws. Jonah got the short straw. 8Then they grilled him: "Confess. Why this disaster? What is your work? Where do you come from? What country? What family?" 9He told them, "I'm a Hebrew. I worship God, the God of heaven who made sea and land." 10At that, the men were frightened, really frightened, and said, "What on earth have you done!" As Jonah talked, the sailors realized that he was running away from God. 11They said to him, "What are we going to do with you—to get rid of this storm?" By this time the sea was wild, totally out of control. 12Jonah said, "Throw me overboard, into the sea. Then the storm will stop. It's all my fault. I'm the cause of the storm. Get rid of me and you'll get rid of the storm." 13But no. The men tried rowing back to shore. They made no headway. The storm only got worse and worse, wild and raging. 14Then they prayed to God, "O God! Don't let us drown because of this man's life, and don't blame us for his death. You are God. Do what you think is best." 15They took Jonah and threw him overboard. Immediately the sea was quieted down. 16The sailors were impressed, no longer terrified by the sea, but in awe of God. They worshiped God, offered a sacrifice, and made vows.*

Do you remember how you felt when you were woken up and you realised that you were the cause of the storm and that the sailors were suffering because of you? Their lives were in your hands – they could die because of you! Would you come clean and tell the truth?

Thank goodness that God loves you – because even though you disobeyed him, he did not let you go that easily. The storm, the sailors, the ship, the captain were really God’s provisions. Even when you were out of God’s will – God pursued you! God will complete the work he has begun in you!

Take a moment to reflect:

\* Are you sailing on the wrong boat?

\* Are you headed in the wrong direction?

\* Is there anything that you and God are arguing about?

\* Is there an area in which you are reluctant to obey God?

\* Is there someone who might not hear about God’s love because you are disobeying him?

\* Who will be negatively affected if you do not obey God?

*17Then God assigned a huge fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the fish's belly three days and nights.*

**Activity:** Switch off the lights – **sit** in the belly of the whale.

You thought you were going to die for sure – thrown overboard – but God was with you and sent the whale to swallow you! Remember God is in you! He has invested His life in you, He's gifted you. He's called you. He cares! It may take a while, but the raging waves and the storm can be calmed, if you will just trust God.

**Jonah 2**

**At the Bottom of the Sea**

But do you remember how alone you felt for those three days? Did you enjoy rolling around in the digestive juices of the belly of the whale? Those three lonely days taught you so much – in fact, you even captured it in a psalm that you wrote:

*1Then Jonah prayed to his God from the belly of the fish. 2He prayed: "In trouble, deep trouble, I prayed to God. He answered me. From the belly of the grave I cried, 'Help!' You heard my cry. 3You threw me into ocean's depths, into a watery grave, with ocean waves, ocean breakers crashing over me. 4I said, 'I've been thrown away, thrown out, out of your sight. I'll never again lay eyes on your Holy Temple.'*

**1. Pain makes us accept God's will for us**. God will use pain in our lives to bring us in line with what he wants us to do for him.

*5Ocean gripped me by the throat. The ancient Abyss grabbed me and held tight.*

*My head was all tangled in seaweed at the bottom of the sea where the mountains take root. 6I was as far down as a body can go, and the gates were slamming shut behind me forever—Yet you pulled me up from that grave alive, O God, my God!*

**2. Pain reminds us that all is not well** – pain has a way of getting our attention and making us face reality!

*7When my life was slipping away, I remembered God, And my prayer got through to you, made it all the way to your Holy Temple. 8Those who worship hollow gods, god-frauds, walk away from their only true love.*

**3. Pain makes us remember that God is our first love**. We cannot hold onto God's resources and our idols at the same time. We lose the grace that God has for us when we worship idols.

*9But I'm worshiping you, God, calling out in thanksgiving! And I'll do what I promised I'd do! Salvation belongs to God!"*

**4. Pain makes us thank God for who He is and what He has done**. When we worship God we are ready to do what he wants us to do or what we promised we would do.

So, pain is not necessarily mean to punish us but to bring us to our senses; to preserve us from a wrong path that we are taking; to remind us that we have run away from God’s presence and need to return and to help us repent and return to our first love with God.

*10Then God spoke to the fish, and it vomited up Jonah on the seashore.*

After you had finished praying and had learnt what God was teaching you, God told the whale to spit you out and you washed up on dry ground!

**Activity:** Youth eat a marshmallow fish to celebrate their escape from the whale.

**Jonah 3**

**Jonah Speaks for God in Nineveh**

*1Next, God spoke to Jonah a second time: 2"Up on your feet and on your way to the big city of Nineveh! Preach to them. They're in a bad way and I can't ignore it any longer." This time 3Jonah started off straight for Nineveh, obeying God's orders to the letter. Nineveh was a big city, very big—it took three days to walk across it.*

This time you heard God’s commission and you went in the right direction. A journey over mountains and desert plains – over 500 miles – but you had learnt the lesson of running away from God and you were not going to do that again. There were over half a million people in the city and it took three days to walk across it! It was a big city!!!

*4Jonah entered the city, went one day's walk and preached, "In forty days Nineveh will be smashed."*

And your message? Not exactly a gentle encouragement but a serious warning that in 40 days God was going to destroy the city! Do you remember how you struggled with mixed emotions as you shared the message – it was hard to preach love to these evil people!!!

**Activity:** Have youth share their personal testimony of how they came to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

**The People Respond with Repentance**

*5The people of Nineveh listened, and trusted God. They proclaimed a citywide fast and dressed in burlap to show their repentance. Everyone did it—rich and poor, famous and obscure, leaders and followers. 6When the message reached the king of Nineveh, he got up off his throne, threw down his royal robes, dressed in burlap, and sat down in the dirt. 7Then he issued a public proclamation throughout Nineveh, authorized by him and his leaders: "Not one drop of water, not one bite of food for man, woman, or animal, including your herds and flocks! 8Dress them all, both people and animals, in burlap, and send up a cry for help to God. Everyone must turn around, turn back from an evil life and the violent ways that stain their hands. 9Who knows? Maybe God will turn around and change his mind about us, quit being angry with us and let us live!" 10God saw what they had done, that they had turned away from their evil lives. He did change his mind about them. What he said he would do to them he didn't do.*

You watched as the people and the king, repented of their sin and even put on sack cloth and covered themselves with ashes – symbols of grief and mourning. Here 150 kilometers northwest of modern day Baghdad the biggest revival in history took place. God came through and blessed your preaching with tangible results – how did you feel? Thrilled?

**Jonah 4**

**Jonah and the Lord**

*1Jonah was furious. He lost his temper. 2He yelled at God, "God! I knew it—when I was back home, I knew this was going to happen! That's why I ran off to Tarshish! I knew you were sheer grace and mercy, not easily angered, rich in love, and ready at the drop of a hat to turn your plans of punishment into a program of forgiveness! 3"So, God, if you won't kill them, kill me! I'm better off dead!"*

You had tried to stop the will of God – you hoped you could stop God showing mercy to the Ninevites. But God is a God of mercy and compassion and he always shows mercy to people! You even asked God to kill you if he was not going to kill your enemies.

*4 God said, "What do you have to be angry about?"*

What was God saying to you? “Jonah, do you have a right to be angry that I am a God of mercy, when you yourself have benefited so greatly from that mercy? So, I can show you mercy, but I can’t have mercy on this great city?”

*5But Jonah just left. He went out of the city to the east and sat down in a sulk. He put together a makeshift shelter of leafy branches and sat there in the shade to see what would happen to the city.*

**Activity:** People move outside the city and sit down to watch what will happen.

You were still hoping that God would nuke the city!

*6God arranged for a broad-leafed tree to spring up. It grew over Jonah to cool him off and get him out of his angry sulk. Jonah was pleased and enjoyed the shade. Life was looking up. But then God sent a worm. 7By dawn of the next day, the worm had bored into the shade tree and it withered away.*

**Activities:** (1) Give youth a green leaf to hold and feel. (2) Give them a sour worm to eat. (3) Give them a dry leaf which they must crush (they drop the green leaf)

*8The sun came up and God sent a hot, blistering wind from the east. The sun beat down on Jonah's head and he started to faint. He prayed to die: "I'm better off dead!" 9Then God said to Jonah, "What right do you have to get angry about this shade tree?" Jonah said, "Plenty of right. It's made me angry enough to die!"*

**Activity:** Switchon a gas heater and have youth pile cardboard boxes in between them and the heat source. Get a fan aimed at them to symbolise the hot wind.

While the Ninevites were praying for deliverance, you were praying for destruction. You made your way outside the city and found a great seat to watch it get destroyed. But God was about to put together an object lesson that would finally get through to you – and show you what he is like. God got your attention first by making you glad – he grew the vine that gave you shade in the heart of the day. You were thrilled! But at sunrise God sent a worm that killed the vine – and once more you shook a fist at God.

*10God said, "What's this? How is it that you can change your feelings from pleasure to anger overnight about a mere shade tree that you did nothing to get? You neither planted nor watered it. It grew up one night and died the next night. 11So, why can't I likewise change what I feel about Nineveh from anger to pleasure, this big city of more than 120,000 childlike people who don't yet know right from wrong, to say nothing of all the innocent animals?"*

It would take you a while but you learnt that:

1. God loves His creation and he looks after it and makes it grow. (10)

2. God loves people whether they please Him or not. (11)

God had put his arm around you and said: “Jonah, think about what you're saying. Let me give you a little perspective on what has just happened to you. It has all been designed to teach you something about me, yourself and others. What did this plant really mean to you? Your attachment to it could not be very deep, for it was here one day and gone the next. You were motivated by self-interest and not by genuine love. You were never devoted to it like a gardener is to his garden. What would you expect a gardener to feel if he had tended a plant and then he watched it wither and die? This is how I feel about Nineveh, only much more so. All those people, all those animals – I made them, I have loved them all these years. Nineveh means the world to me. Your pain is small compared to mine when I think about their destruction.”

This is the heart of God – He is kind and loving and wants everyone to come to know him and experience his love and his perfect plan for their lives.

What has God said to you today?

\* Will you tell others about God?

\* Will you tell people you don’t like that Jesus loves them?

Isaiah 6

*New Living Translation*

It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.

They were calling out to each other,

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven’s Armies!

The whole earth is filled with his glory!”

Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke.

Then I said, “It’s all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. He touched my lips with it and said, “See, this coal has touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven.”

Then I heard the Lord asking, “Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?”

I said, “Here I am. Send me.”

And he said, “Yes, Go!”

**How God Fix Jonah**

Jonah was a prophet.

God put Him hand on Jonah

But Jonah head be hard.

Jonah head be hard too much.

Lord God Almighty can fix the thing.

Can fix hard head

Can fix weak back

Can fix crooked leg.

God can fix anything.

Hear how He fix Jonah.

God say, "Jonah, O Jonah!"

Jonah say, "Yea Lord!"

God say, "Jonah

Go down to Nineveh and preach My Word."

Nineveh be one wa-wa place

And Jonah fear that town too much.

And he fear God, but small.

He make like he go, but he hide.

Jonah go to the waterside

He look them boats what sail.

He say to cap'n for one boat, "What side you go?"

The man say, "Nineveh."

Jonah say, "No."

Nother cap'n come and Jonah say, "What side you go, man?"

The man say, "Tarsus."

Jonah climb aboard

And when the boat shove off he lay down low

And on the waterside no man can see him.

Lord God Almighty say, "Ho!"

When God say "Ho" it make a mighty wind

And waves run on the boat

And rock it so the crew mens fear.

The crew mens do all that they can.

They throw the cargo overboard

They take in sail

They put out oars

They hold, they pull,

But all the time more water come inside.

They fear.

They crew mens say the waters want somebody on the boat.

They make a trial with sassa wood to see what man bring trouble.

They watch the stick go round about

And pass up all but Jonah.

And Jonah say,

"For true.

The palaver be on my own head for true.

I run to hide from Lord God Almighty

Who rule all the wind and run all the water.

But if I make my bed in hell

I know He find me."

Lord God Almighty say "Ho" again.

The wind holler louder

The water rise higher

And all men see His power.

Then the cap'n and the crew mens take a hold on Jonah.

They lift him up and throw him in the sea.

It make the boat ride easy.

The wind go soft and still

The sea make like a river.

The crew mens look about and say, "Lord God Almighty!"

God say, "Jonah, O Jonah!"

Jonah say, "Yea, Lord!"

God say, "Jonah,

Go down to Nineveh and preach My Word."

Jonah don't know where at he live.

But God done make a special fish

When the crew mens throw Jonah overboard

That fish take Jonah up.

Three days the fish ride Jonah.

The fish carry man in him belly

Three days, and Jonah ain't savvy.

The fish carry Jonah to the Nineveh beach.

Lord God Almighty talk to the fish.

The fish open up and puke Jonah out.

Jonah wash in the sea and dry in the sun

And he go to Nineveh to preach the Word.

Graham, L. 2000. *How God Fix Jonah*. Boyds Mills Press. Pennsylvania.

**Journey #3: The Tabernacle**

**Reading:**

The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction." Then Moses set out with Joshua his aide, and Moses went up on the mountain of God. When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the LORD called to Moses from within the cloud. To the Israelites the glory of the LORD looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain. Then Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. And he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. The LORD said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give. "Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you. ***(Exodus 24 and 25)***

**Narration:**

Can you hear God calling you to approach him? The Old Testament tabernacle was given to God's people as an example of how God is to be approached in worship. It was a layout that God revealed to Moses and each part of the tabernacle is rich with symbolism that can guide us in our worship. Today we are going to take a journey through the tabernacle - we will come close to experiencing what the high priest in the Old Testament experience when he went to worship on behalf of the nation of Israel.

**Multimedia Presentation:**

Video: A 3D journey through the Tabernacle on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQus4je7Jw4

**Worship:** A call to approach God in worship

**1. Bronze Altar (At the front of the room on a small table)**

*Symbolism:* Dedicate Yourself to God

*Scripture Reading:*

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living sacrifice, holy--the kind he can accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? (Romans 12:1)

*Activities:*

\* Offering of Tithes and Gifts

\* Surrendering of an Idol

\* Bring your tithes and offerings before God in appreciation for all he has done for you.

\* What one thing is in danger of coming between yourself and God - consider sacrificing it on the altar – maybe find something that symbolises it. Paper and pens to write things down.

**2. Bronze Basin (In front of the serving hatch)**

*Symbolism:* Confess and Ask for Cleansing

*Scripture Reading:*

(Confession) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

(Pardon) The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. (Psalm 103:8)

*Activity:* To symbolise the forgiveness that God gives when we confess, we have provided water and towels for you to use however you choose.

*Song Item:* about forgiveness and pardon

**3. Golden Candlestick (On the Table Tennis Table)**

*Symbolism:* Meditate on the Word of God

*Scripture Reading:*

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105)

*Activity:* Youth are each given a short section from the Manga Bible to read (the story of Jesus’ temptation).

**Switch off the Lights**

*Activity:* A leader will light a centre candle and encourage youth to each light a candle to symbolise the way in which God's word guides us along our path – thank God that we have the Bible that leads us to him

**4. Table of Shewbread (On the pool table on a dance board)**

*Symbolism:* Reflect on the Unity of the Body

*Scripture Readings:*

How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore. (Psalm 133)

*Activity:* We have provided bread so that you can eat together with your brothers and sisters at the table before the Lord. You might want to remember that God has made us all as family.

**5. Incense Altar (at the foosball table)**

*Symbolism:* Offer Prayers of Intercession

*Scripture Reading:*

And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints…Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand. (Revelation 5:8; 8:3)

*Activities:*

Pray about serious issues we are facing as a country today!

Burn some incense which reminds us that your prayer has been heard by God.

**6. Ark of the Covenant (Juice at the serving hatch)**

*Symbolism:* Express Devotion to God

*Scripture Reading:*

There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the Testimony, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites. (Exodus 25:22)

*Activity: Get a cup of grape juice and find a place to sit at the feet of father God. Enjoy his presence.*

*Worship:* 2 or 3 intimate worship songs

**Final Challenge**

To get close to the tabernacle – the outer courts, you had to have been born an Israelite - of the tribe of Judah, Benjamin or Dan.

To worship in the holy place you had to be born of the tribe of Levi and of the family of Aaron – you had to be a priest – in fact, the High Priest.

You could only go in there once a year and only after the most elaborate preparations, and even then only for a very little while.

We have full access to Father God – every day of the week – every minute of every hour – you don’t need to go to the temple in Jerusalem – just turn towards Father wherever you are!!!

**Scripture Readings**

**Introduction Reading**

The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction." Then Moses set out with Joshua his aide, and Moses went up on the mountain of God. When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the LORD called to Moses from within the cloud. To the Israelites the glory of the LORD looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain. Then Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. And he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. The LORD said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give. "Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you. ***(Exodus 24 and 25)***

**Narration:**

Can you hear God calling you to approach him? The Old Testament tabernacle was given to God's people as an example of how God is to be approached in worship. It was a layout that God revealed to Moses and each part of the tabernacle is rich with symbolism that can guide us in our worship. Today we are going to take a journey through the tabernacle - we will come close to experiencing what the high priest in the Old Testament experience when he went to worship on behalf of the nation of Israel.

**1. Bronze Altar**

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living sacrifice, holy--the kind he can accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask?

(Romans 12:1)

**2. Bronze Basin**

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. (Psalm 103:8)

**3. Golden Candlestick**

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105)

**4. Table of Shewbread**

How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.

(Psalm 133)

**5. Incense Altar**

And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints…Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand. (Revelation 5:8; 8:3)

**6. Ark of the Covenant**

There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the Testimony, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites. (Exodus 25:22)

**Supplies for Each Station**

**1. Bronze Altar**

Boxes for offering of tithes and gifts

Box for placing of idols

Symbols of idols? Pics?

**2. Bronze Basin**

Place to wash hands/feet

Towels

Basins

**3. Golden Candlestick**

Candles to light

Matches

Extract from Manga Bible Temptation)

**4. Table of Shewbread**

Table with fresh bread

Paper plates?

**5. Incense Altar**

Incense

A fire to burn it in

Webber braai from Andrew

**6. Ark of the Covenant**

Grape juice to drink in cups

**Other Needs:**

PowerPoint and Video

A person responsible for each station

Scripture readings

**Journey #4: Encounter Father - A Weekend Journey**

**Friday Night**

17:30-18:30 Pick up and meet at a pastor’s Home

18:30-19:00 Orientation for the weekend

19:00-20:30 Supper at the pastors Home (**Encounter Father – An Invitation**)

20:30-21:30 Drop off at homes

**Saturday Morning**

07:00-08:00 Pick up and meet at West Park Cemetery

08:00-09:00 Retreat in the Cemetery (**Encounter Father in the Light of Eternity**)

09:00-09:15 Refreshments

09:15-10:00 Travel to Roodekrans Botanical Gardens

10:00-12:30 Personal Retreat (**Encounter Father in Scripture**)

12:30-13:30 Lunch @ Hillfox McDonalds

13:30-14:30 Travel to Zoo Lake

14:30-15:00 Reflections on the Morning Experiences

15:00-15:15 Refreshments

15:15-16:45 Group Games at Zoo Lake (**Encounter Father in Play**)

16:45-17:00 Travel to Dave’s Home

17:00-18:15 Supper at Dave’s Home – Preview of Mall session

18:15-18:30 Walk to Mall

18:30-19:45 Mall Retreat (**Encounter Father in Crowds**)

19:45-20:15 Meet at Wimpy to Debrief Mall Experience

20:15-20:30 Walk to Dave’s House

20:30-21:30 Drop off at homes

**Sunday Morning**

08:00-09:00 Pick up and Meet at St. Martins in the Veld

09:00-09:30 Preview the Service

09:30-11:00 Attend Church Service (**Encounter Father in Worship**)

11:00-11:30 Drive to Emmarentia Dam

11:30-11:45 Refreshments

11:45-12:30 Debrief Church and the Weekend Experience

12:30-13:30 Picnic Lunch

13:30-14:30 Drop off at homes

**Encounter Father Retreat**

**Preparing to Connect with Father God (**30 Minutes)

**Silence** – spend a few minutes in silence!

**Confession:** What could hinder me from relating to God today? Do I have anything that I need to confess?

**Read and Reflect on Scripture:** Mark 6:30-32

*The apostles then rendezvoused with Jesus and reported on all that they had done and taught. Jesus said, "Come off by yourselves; let's take a break and get some rest." For there was constant coming and going. They didn't even have time to eat.*

**Journal Your Thoughts:**

1. In what ways has my life been like that of the people in the passage?

2. What am I hoping to achieve or experience during this retreat?

3. What invitation is God extending to me through the passage?

**Connecting through Scripture** (30 Minutes)

Slowly the following scriptures a few time - enter into the experience. Meditating on words as the text intersects with your hopes and dreams. Turn your reflection into prayer as you speak it out to God. Reflect on what God is saying to your heart through the text.

**Scene 1: Matthew 26:69-75**

*Meanwhile, as Peter was sitting in the courtyard, a girl came over and said to him, "You were with Jesus, for both of you are from Galilee." But Peter denied it loudly. "I don't even know what you are talking about," he angrily declared. Later, out by the gate, another girl noticed him and said to those standing around, "This man was with Jesus--from Nazareth." Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. "I don't even know the man," he said. But after a while the men who had been standing there came over to him and said, "We know you are one of his disciples, for we can tell by your Galilean accent." Peter began to curse and swear. "I don't even know the man," he said. And immediately the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said, "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went away, crying bitterly.*

What key words stand out to me? What is Father saying to me?

**Scene 2: John 21:9-17**

*When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught. Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.*

What key words stand out to me? What is Father saying to me?

**Connecting Through the Ten Commandments** (30 Minutes)

**1. I am the Lord your God: you shall have no other gods before me.**

\* Has my love for God - Father Son Holy Spirit – decreased lately? How and why?

\* Are there things or people that have become gods in my life?

**2. You shall not make for yourself any idol.**

\* Have I made an idol of money, success, technique, the praise of others, food, drink, etc.?

\* Have I tried to manipulate him rather than live responsively to him?

**3. You shall not dishonor the name of the Lord your God.**

\* Have I treated God lightly?

\* Have I been hypocritical -- living a form of righteousness but denying its power?

**4. Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.**

\* Do I set aside a day each week for prayer, worship, rest and play?

\* Do I do unnecessary work, business or activity on my day of rest?

**5. Honor your father and mother.**

\* Have I failed to do my respect my parents in any way?

\* Have I done anything to offend or exploit my parents or my family?

**6. You shall not commit murder.**

\* Have I failed to show respect for all life?

\* Have I had murderous thoughts about others?

**7. You shall not commit adultery.**

\* Have I indulged in any kind of inappropriate sexual thoughts or acts?

\* Have I done anything to offend, abuse or manipulate the opposite sex?

**8. You shall not steal.**

\* Have I been dishonest in any respect in my personal or work life?

\* Have I stolen goods or reputation from others?

**9. You shall not bear false witness.**

\* Have I told lies?

\* Have I failed to speak out when I knew that others were lying?

**10. You shall not covet anything which belongs to your neighbour.**

\* Have I envied the good fortune of others -- their reputation, accomplishments or stuff?

\* Have I been greedy, materialistic or selfish?

**Connecting through God’s Deeds** (15 minutes)

*I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds. Your ways, O God, are holy. What god is so great as our God?* Psalm 77:12-13

Make a list of God's works and deeds that come to mind and meditate on them.

**Connecting through Creation** (30 Minutes)

Spend 5 minutes looking at each of the following items in creation and write down what God is saying to you or what you learn about God:

\* The Grass

\* A Tree

\* The Hills

\* The Sky

\* A Stream

**Connecting through Walking** (15 Minutes)  
Take a walk and aim to connect with God each step of the way. Start a conversation with God and keep it going for as long as you are walking.

**Words for Reflection**

*Almighty and most merciful Father,*

*We have wandered and strayed from your ways like lost sheep.*

*We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.*

*We have offended against your holy laws.*

*We have left undone those things that we ought to have done;*

*and we have done those things that we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us.*

*But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us in our need.*

*Spare those who confess their faults.*

*Restore those who are penitent,*

*according to your promises declared to mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,*

*that from this time we may live a disciplined, righteous and godly life,*

*to the glory of your holy name. Amen.*

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me--watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." (Matthew 11:28-30)

**Journey #5: My Heart, Christ's Home**

This is a journey based on a classic book called *My Heart, Christ’s Home*. A home would be the ideal setting for this story to be re-enacted.

**At the Front Door**

Jesus said to his disciples, "If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make out home with him." (Jn 14:23). When we give our lives to Jesus he enters our heart, settles down and makes him home there. I will never forget the evening I invited him into my heart. What an entrance he made! It was not a spectacular, emotional thing, but very real, occurring at the very center of my soul. He came into the darkness of my heart and turned on the light. He built a fire in the fire place and banished the chill. He started music where there had been stillness and harmony where there had been discord. He filled the emptiness with his own loving fellowship. I have never regretted opening the door to Christ and I never will. This is the first step in making the heart Christ's home. He has said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to eat with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20). If you want to know the reality of God and the personal presence of Jesus Christ simply open wide the door and ask him to come in and be your Savior and Lord.

After Christ entered my heart, in the joy of that new‑found relationship I said to him, "Lord, I want this heart of mine to be yours. I want you to settle down here and be fully at home. I want you to use it as your own. Let me show you around and make you comfortable. I want you to enjoy our time together."

**In the Study**

The first room we looked at together was the study ‑ the library. It is the study of the mind. It is an important room because it is the control room of the house. He entered with me and looked around at the books in the bookcase, the magazines on the table, the pictures on the walls. As I followed his gaze, I became uncomfortable. Strangely enough, I had not felt badly about this room before, but now that he was there with me looking at these things, I was embarrassed. There were some books on the shelves his eyes were too pure to look at. On the table were a few magazines a Christian has no business reading. As for the pictures on the walls - some of these were shameful. Red‑faced I turned to him and said, "Master, I know this room really needs to be cleaned up and made over. Will you help me shape it up and change it to the way it ought to be?” “Certainly," he replied. "I'm glad to help you! I've come to handle things like this! First of all, take all the material you are reading and viewing which are not true, good, pure and helpful, and throw them out! Now put on the empty shelves the books of the Bible. Fill the library with the Scriptures and meditate on them day and night. As for the pictures on the walls, you will have difficulty controlling these images, but I have something that will help." He gave me a full‑sized portrait of himself. "Hang this centrally," he said, "on the wall of the mind." I did, and I have discovered through the years that when my thoughts focus on Christ, the awareness of his presence, purity and power causes wrong and impure thoughts to flee. So he has helped me to bring my thoughts under his control, but the struggle remains.

If you have difficulty with this little room of the mind, let me encourage you to bring Christ there. Pack it full with the Word of God, study it, meditate on it and keep clearly before you the presence of the Lord Jesus.

**In the Dinning Room**

From the study we went into the dining room, the room of appetites and desires. Now this was a large room, a most important place to me. I spent a lot of time and hard work trying to satisfy all my wants. I told him, "This is my favorite room. I'm sure you will be pleased with what we serve here." He seated himself at the table and inquired, "What is on the menu for dinner tonight?" “Well," I said, "my favorite dishes: money, academic degrees, stocks, with newspaper articles of fame and fortune as side dishes." These were the things I liked. There was nothing so very bad in any of them, but it was not really the kind of food which would feed the soul and satisfy true spiritual hunger. When the plates were placed before my new friend, he said nothing. However, I observe that he did not eat. I asked, somewhat disturbed, "Savior, don't you like this food? What is the trouble?" He answered, "I have food to eat you do not know of. My food is to do the will of him that sent me." He looked at me again and said, "If you want food that really satisfies you, do the will of your heavenly Father. Put his pleasure before your own. Stop striving for your own desires, your own ambitions, your own satisfactions. Seek to please him. That food will really satisfy you. Try a bit of it!" And there at the table he gave me a taste of doing God's will. What flavor! There is no food like it in all the world. It alone satisfies. At the end everything else leaves you hungry.

What's the menu in the dining room of your desires? What kind of food are you serving your divine companion and yourself? Do you focus on the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes or the pride of life" (Jn 2:16)? Or is finding and doing God's will the meat and drink that satisfies your souls?

**In the Lounge**

We moved next into the lounge. This was a quiet, comfortable room with a warm atmosphere. I liked it. It had a fireplace, sofa, overstuffed chairs, a bookcase and an intimate atmosphere. He also seemed pleased with it. He said, "Indeed, this is a great room. Let's come here often. It's secluded and quiet, and we can have good talks and fellowship together." Well, naturally, as a young Christian I was thrilled. I couldn't think of anything I would rather do than have a few minutes alone with Christ in close companionship. He promised, "I will be here every morning early. Meet me here and we will start the day together." So, morning after morning, I would go downstairs to the living room. He would take a book of the Bible from the bookcase, open it, and we would read it together. He would share with me the wonder of God's saving truth and make my heart sing as he shared all he had done for me and would be to me. Those times together were wonderful. Through the Bible and his Holy Spirit he would talk to me and I would respond in prayer. Our friendship deepened in these quiet times of personal conversation. However, under the pressure of many responsibilities, little by little, this time began to be shortened. I was just got too busy to give special, regular time to be with Jesus. Eventually not only was the period shortened, but I began to miss days now and then, such as during exams. Matters of urgency demanding my attention were continually crowding out the quiet times of conversation with Jesus. Often I would miss two days in a row or more. One morning, I remember rushing down the steps in a hurry to be on my way to an important appointment. As I passed the living room, the door was open. Glancing in I saw a fire in the fireplace and Jesus sitting there. Suddenly, in dismay, it came to me, "He is my guest. I invited him into my heart! He has come as my Savior and Friend to live with me. Yet here I am neglecting him." I stopped, turned and hesitantly went in. "Master, I'm sorry! Have you been here every morning?" “Yes," he said, "I told you I would be here to meet you." I was even more ashamed! He had been faithful in spite of my faithlessness. I asked him to forgive me and he did. He said, "The trouble is that you have been thinking of the quiet time, of Bible study and prayer, as a means for your own spiritual growth. This is true, but you have forgotten that this time means something to me also. Remember, I love you. At a great cost I have redeemed you. I value your fellowship. Just to have you look up into my face warms my heart." You know, the truth that Christ wants my fellowship, that he loves me, wants me to be with him and waits for me, has done more to transform my quiet time with God than any other single fact.

Don't let Christ wait alone in the living room of your heart, but every day find a time and place when, with the Word of God and in prayer, you may be together with him.

**In the Garage**

Before long he asked, "Do you have a workroom in your house?" Out in the garage of the home of my heart I had a workbench and some equipment, but I would play around at making a few little gadgets, but I wasn't producing anything substantial. I took him out there. He looked over the workbench and the few talents and skills I had. He said, "What are you producing with your life for the kingdom of God?" He looked at one or two of the little toys that I had thrown together on the bench and he held one up to me. "Is this the sort of thing you are doing for others in your Christian life?" I felt terrible! "Lord, that's the best I can do. I know it isn't much. I'm ashamed to say that I don't think I'll ever do much more." “Would you like to do better?" he asked. “You know I would!" I replied. “Well, first remember what I taught you: 'Apart from me you can do nothing' (Jn 15:5). “Come relax in me and let my Spirit work through you. I know you are unskilled, clumsy and awkward, but the Spirit is the Master worker. If he controls your heart and your hands, he will work through you. Now turn around." Then putting his great strong arms around me, and his hands under mine he picked up the tools and began to work through me. "Relax. You are still too tense. Let go ‑ let me do the work!" It amazed me what his skilled hands can do through mine if I only trust him and let him have his way. I am very far from satisfied with the product that is being turned out. I still get in his way at times. There's much more that I need to learn. But I do know that whatever has been produced for God has been through him and through the power of his Spirit in me.

Don't be discouraged because you cannot do much for God. It's not our ability but our availability that's important. Give what you are to Christ. Be sensitive and responsive to what he wants you to do. Trust him. He will surprise you with what he can do through you!

**In the Family Room**

I remember the time he inquired about the family room, where I went for fun and fellowship. I was hoping he would not ask me about that. There were certain associations and activities I wanted to keep for myself. I did not think Jesus would enjoy or approve of them. I evaded the question. However, one evening when I was on my way out with some of my buddies for a night on the town, he was at the door and stopped me with a glance. "Are you going out?" I answered, "Yes." “Good," he said, "I would like to go with you." “Oh," I replied rather awkwardly. "I don't think, Lord, that you would really enjoy where we are going. Let's go out together tomorrow night. Tomorrow night we can go to a Bible class or a social at the church, but tonight I have another engagement." “As you wish," was his comment. "Only I thought when I came into your home we were going to do everything together‑‑be close companions! Just know that I am willing to go with you!" “Well," I said, "we'll go someplace together tomorrow night!" That evening I spent some miserable hours. I felt rotten! What kind of a friend was I to Jesus? Deliberately leaving him out of part of my life, doing things and going places that I know very well he would not enjoy? When I returned that evening, there was a light in his room and I went up to talk it over with him. I acknowledged, "Lord, I have learned my lesson. I know now I can't have a good time if you are not along. From now on we will do everything together!" Then we went down together in the family room of the house. He transformed it. He brought new friendships, new excitement, new joys. Laughter and music have been ringing in the house ever since. With a twinkle in his eye, he smiled, "You thought that with me around you wouldn't have much fun, didn't you? Remember, I have come 'that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full'" (Jn 15:11).

**In the Bedroom**

One day when we were in my bedroom he asked me about the pictures next to my bed. “That's a picture of my girlfriend," I told him. Though I knew my relationship with my girlfriend was a good one, I felt funny talking to him about it. She and I were struggling with some issues and I didn't want to discuss them with him. I tried to change the subject. But Jesus must have known what I was thinking. "You are beginning to question my teaching on sex, aren't you? That intercourse is only for those who are joined in the covenant of marriage? You're feeling I may be asking something unnatural if not impossible for you. You're afraid my will on this will limit the full enjoyment of life and love. Isn't that true?" “Yes," I confessed. “Then listen carefully to what I am saying," he continued. "I forbid adultery and premarital sex not because sex is bad but because it is good. Beyond the physical ecstasy it is a means of bonding two lives in deepening love. It has the creative power to bring human life into being. Sex is powerful. Used properly sex has tremendous potential for good. Used improperly, it destroys the good. For this reason God intends it to be expressed only within the commitment of a loving life partnership. There is far more to love than just sex. “Let me help you in your relationship with the opposite sex. If you should fail and feel shame and guilt, know I still love you and will remain with you. Talk to me about it! Acknowledge the wrong! Take steps to avoid it happening again! Rely on my strength to keep you from falling and to lead you into a relationship of love in marriage where two truly become one in me."

**In the Passage Cupboard**

One day I found him waiting for me at the front door. As I entered, he said to me, "There's a peculiar odor in the house. Something must be dead around here. I think it is in the passage cupboard." As soon as he said this I knew what he was talking about. Indeed there was a small cupboard in the passage, just a metre square. In that cupboard behind lock and key I had one or two personal things I did not want anybody to know about. Certainly I did not want Christ to see them. They were dead and rotting things left over from the old life ‑ not wicked, but not right and good to have in a Christian life. Yet I loved them. I wanted them so much for myself that I was really afraid to admit they were there. Reluctantly I went towards the cupboard with him and as we got closer the odor became stronger and stronger. He pointed at the door and said, "It's in there! Some dead thing!" It made me angry! That's the only way I can put it. I had given him access to the study, the dining room, the living room, the workroom, the family room, the bedroom and now he was asking me about a little cupboard. I said to myself, "This is too much! I am not going to give him the key." “Well," he responded, reading my thoughts, "if you think I am going to stay at your house with that up smell, you are mistaken. I will take my bed out on the back veranda or somewhere else. I'm certainly not going to stay around that." And I saw him start to walk out the house. When you have come to know and love Jesus Christ, one of the worst things that can happen is to sense him withdrawing his face and fellowship. I had to give in. "I'll give you the key," I said sadly, "but you'll have to open the cupboard and clean it out. I haven't the strength to do it." “I know," he said. "I know you haven't. Just give me the key. Just authorize me to handle that cupboard and I will." So, with trembling fingers, I passed the key over to him. He took it from my hand, walked over to the door, opened it, entered it, took out the putrefying stuff that was rotting there and threw it all away. Then he cleansed the cupboard, painted it and fixed it up all in a moment's time. Immediately a fresh, fragrant breeze swept through the house. The whole atmosphere changed. What release and victory to have that dead thing out of my life! No matter what sin or what pain there might be in my past, Jesus is ready to forgive, to heal and to make whole.

**Transferring the Title Deed**

Then a thought came to me. "I have been trying to keep this heart of mine clean and available for Christ but it is hard work. I start on one room and no sooner have I cleaned it than I discover another room is dirty. I begin on the second room and the first one is already dusty again. I'm getting tired trying to maintain a clean heart and obedient life. I just am not up to it!" Suddenly I asked, "Lord, is there a possibility you would be willing to manage the whole house and operate it for me just as you did that cupboard? Could I give you the responsibility of keeping my heart what it ought to be and myself doing what I ought to be doing?" I could see his face light up as he replied, "I'd love to! This is exactly what I came to do. You can't live out the Christian life in your own strength. That is impossible. Let me do it for you and through you. That's the only way it will really work! But I am not the owner of this house. Remember, I'm here as your guest. I have no authority to take charge since the property is not mine." In a flash it all became clear. Excitedly I said, "Lord, you have been my guest, and I have been trying to play the host. From now on you are going to be the owner and master of the house. I'm going to be the servant!" Running as fast as I could to the strongbox, I took out the title deed to the house describing its assets and liabilities, its condition, location and situation. Than rushing back to him, I eagerly signed it over giving title to him alone for time and eternity. Dropping to my knees, I presented it to him, "Here it is, all that I am and have forever. Now you run the house. Just let me stay with you as houseboy and friend." He took my life that day and I can give you my word, there is no better way to live the Christian life. He knows how to keep it and use it. A deep peace settled down on my soul that has remained. I am his and he is mine forever!

May Christ settle down and be at home as Lord of your heart also.

**My Heart, Christ's Home Activities and Resource Needed:**

**At the Front Door**

Print scriptures on cardboard and stick them on the front door:

"If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make out home with him." (John 14:23).

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to eat with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

Props: Travel bag and toothbrush as objects to communicate that Jesus is moving in!

**In the Study**

Dodgy magazines/books/pictures on the wall – of a sexual nature or hate speech

Bible and study books

**In the Dinning Room**

Set the table and put out some “dishes”: money, academic degrees, stocks, newspaper articles of fame

Good food – the will of God – love, friendships, family, values

**In the Lounge**

Fireplace

Sofas

A bookcase

Candle

Bible

**In the Garage**

A workbench and some equipment, some things that have been made

Something that Jesus makes with me – spiritual gifts

**In the Family Room**

Buddies

**In the Bedroom**

Pictures next to the bed – girlfriend - sex

**In the Passage Cupboard**

Odor in a cupboard – Chopped up onions in a container

Bucket and deodorant spray to get rid of the smell

A key to hand over to Jesus

Cleaning stuff for Jesus to use

**Transferring the Title Deed**

Title deed of a home

Broom and a mop

Pen to sign the title deed