

Confirmation Retreat

Scripture Passages Handout

Session 1

(from The Message) Matthew 6:5 "And when you come before God, don't turn that into a theatrical production either. All these people making a regular show out of their prayers, hoping for stardom! Do you think God sits in a box seat? 6 Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace. 7 The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant. They're full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from God. 8 Don't fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need. 9 With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this:

(NRSV)

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. "

Session 2

1 Kings 19:1-3; 9-16

1 King Ahab told his wife, Queen Jezebel, all that Elijah had done. 2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not kill you by this time tomorrow." 3 Then Elijah was afraid; he got up and fled for his life, and came to the town of Beer-sheba, which was in the country of Judah.

9 At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10 Elijah answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, also, to take away." 11 The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, and I will speak to you there." When Elijah heard this, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not heard in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not heard in the earthquake; 12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not heard in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. 13 Then in the silence came a still small voice to Elijah that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 14 He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking to take away my life, also." 15 Then the Lord said to him, "Go, return home. When you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. 16 Also you shall anoint Jehu as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha as your student to become a prophet and take your place later on."

Sample Schedule for Confirmation Prayer Retreat

Saturday

8:15 am – Breakfast

8:45ish – Clean up

9 am: Session 1 – The Lord’s Prayer

9:50 am: Break

10 am: Session 2 – The Storms of Silence

10:50 am: Break

11:00 am: Lunch

11:30 pm: Clean up

11:45 pm: Session 3 – Listening to God

12:45 pm: Break

1:00 pm: Session 4 – Writing a Letter from God to you.

2:00 pm: Clean up

2:15 pm: Head Home

NOTES for Teachers

1. Meals can be pretty simple (Breakfast: Fruit, bagels, cereal, donuts; Lunch: Pizza or sub sandwiches), but asking parents to prepare, serve and help clean up with the meals makes for a smoother, more focused time for the teachers.
2. Due to ease of use, space availability and low (read: zero) cost, I’ve done these retreats on Saturdays at the church building. Saturday seems like the best day, but if there’s a church member who has a larger, quiet house who wants to or is willing to share their space for a day with the Confirmation Class, that might be a possibility for you to consider.
3. The last two sessions are a little bit longer due to the writing components of the two sessions. The break between Session 3 & 4 is a little bit longer too, as a way to help the students recover a little bit more before Session 4. Even though the retreat is only 6 hours long, it has been my experience that the retreat usually leaves the students feeling pretty tired and worn out by the end of it.