

Spiritual Guidelines for the Restoration House with Devotional Time

(These are the mandatory spiritual guidelines for the future Restoration House Christian Program.)

1. **Morning Devotional:** (To be held at a set time before breakfast.)
 - a. Group morning devotionals are mandatory, and individual devotions are also highly recommended. The morning group devotional will take place directly before or after breakfast, whether you partake of breakfast or not. The devotional is mandatory, unless someone has a doctor's excuse or is excused because of a serious illness by the House Director.
 - b. The duration of the devotional may vary, but it needs to have substance for the men for their daily activities and should include a Bible Scripture, a thought for the day, and a fervent effectual prayer for the upcoming day's work, travel, families, and other needs the men feel are important.
 - c. The leading of the devotion can be shared; led in turn by the men that are mature enough to lead prayer, select a Scripture, and are willing to pray aloud.
 - d. The devotional leader slot needs to be volunteered for in advance since preparation is necessary. All of the devotional times may be shared in many ways. Such as, one man could volunteer for a week of morning, afternoon, or evening devotionals.
 - e. If the House Director thinks the devotional is not being taken seriously, or not being prepared for with care and prayer, the individual responsible for it needs to be taken aside and spoken to. This is to encourage every man to do his best and not to punish someone who might not be as educated as another.
 - f. There is absolutely **no** excuse for the devotional to be overlooked with an excuse of not having time. This is one reason it would be good to have it before breakfast with all of the men present, even if they are not going to eat or are excused from work for that day. If a man is not working that day, the time with the other men during devotionals will bless his day, and he will still attend. Since these men will be doing hard and dangerous work, traveling, and be in the world (but not of the world), this time is not negotiable.
 - g. If a man refuses, for no just reason, to attend a church, Bible study, or a devotional time, there needs to be serious discipline to prevent this from destroying the unity of those who desire God's influence in the group.
 - i. The chores no one really likes to do and extra chores could be used for discipline, if it seems to discourage future infractions.
 - ii. Since this entire program is Christ-based, continuous infractions having to do with not attending church, devotional time, or behavior unbecoming a Christian should be dealt with as seriously as drinking, use of alcohol or drugs, or even fighting. Sin is sin after all.
2. **Midday Devotional:** (During lunch, especially since the men will mostly be working together with a Christian foreman.)
 - a. Since the time is limited at lunch as the men sit around to eat, perhaps they could read a Scripture and draw a point for how it affects people these days. The men should at least get together and thank God for the food, their safety so far, and pray for the rest of the day, family, etc.
 - b. All the guidelines apply to all the morning, midday, and evening devotionals. They need not be repeated; they are mandatory. (Other than the shorter time allotted for the midday devotional.) Certainly prayer is a necessity if these men are going to form habits as to Who they need to be thankful to and what they need to be thankful for. One day they will be with their own families and their habits to pray and be thankful will hopefully carry over into their children.

3. **Evening Devotional:** (Joining together right before the meal is prepared.)

- a. Everyone joins in evening devotional time. The time set needs to be regular, taking into consideration the evening chores, activities, showers, etc. Any way you look at it, it needs to be **mandatory**. Time allotted should be at least one hour for allowing discussion.
- b. The evening devotional should include a Bible reading that when read daily will read through the Bible in one year (Daily Bread, or a read through the Bible in one-year Bible). There should be thanksgiving offered for the success of the day, and all that God allowed the men to accomplish during the day. The men who volunteer to take turns should concentrate on praying and reading the devotional, not on the speed of getting it done so that they can eat.

4. **Night Devotional:** (Before bed.)

- a. There needs to be a weeknight time for lights out if the men are expected to get up in the morning for work and devotions.
- b. The men can get together for a prayer before they go to bed for this devotion. Seeing as how they will have a common area, they could all get together and join hands for a prayer of thanksgiving and to ask God to watch over them during their night, for their family, for the Restoration Program, and many other things.

5. **Worship other than at the House:**

- a. Church Sunday morning will also be mandatory, unless there is a reason the House Director would approve of. The House Director cannot get too lenient in accepting excuses for not attending Christian programs or the Restoration Program will take a completely different direction, not be taken seriously, and then be of little help to anyone. So someone needs to keep the House Director accountable as he in turn keeps the men of the house accountable.
- b. Sunday morning church should not replace any of the house's devotional time; however, these guidelines are not to become legalistic; they are to form ways of life that these men will carry home with them.
- c. The house will need to know their men well enough to either see to it that all the men attend the same church together; or if there are other Bible teaching churches in the area, they might be allowed to attend one of them. If the men get used to getting up for work and being on time, they should not have a problem getting up to be on time to have their devotional, eat a good breakfast, and then enter church in a timely fashion and not be dragging in late every Sunday.
- d. The church's Bible study or prayer meeting should also be attended to show support for the church you are attending. The fellowship with other brothers and sisters will be an encouragement to the men and help them to be influenced in a positive way. Otherwise, these men will need to be exposed to other believers as often as possible, and they will need to be completely established in God's Word.

6. **The Importance of Devotionals:**

- a. Certainly, there will be many excuses for not having so many devotional times. If there is a problem with these, let the men make up their minds before they fill out their application to come to the Restoration House. There are plenty of heathen programs for men who do not like to spend time with the Lord.
- b. There are many reasons for these times of prayer and Bible reading:
 - i. To teach these men good habits and to encourage their individual walk with the Lord.
 - ii. To have these men carry these habits into their families and have the next generation truly seeking the Lord, and not the lust of the world.
 - iii. If these guidelines are implemented, encouraged, and unwavering, they will bear fruit.

- c. The men should be encouraged to give their prayer requests and have time to discuss the Scripture and the point of the Scripture for them that day. The men need to be able to share their disappointments and request prayer, even the laying on of hands.
- d. Along with learning to pray and devoting some special time with the Lord, this can be a time for these men to learn to share their problems and temptations and know that they have true brothers to help them.
- e. If the atmosphere of the house does not encourage this sharing, there needs to be some time for each person to share with the counselor any problems before they get out of hand.
- f. Someone might say, why have so many devotionals? I say, why not? Either God is going to be number one in the Restoration House or He is not. If these men have not been used to all this worship of the Lord, then what better place to get into the habit?

I have read the three pages of the Spiritual Guidelines for the Restoration House.

Resident's signature

Even though these are spiritual guidelines, I promise to follow them as seriously as any other house rule. I do hereby agree to abide by all rules and guidelines in this document for the year (12 months) of this program. If I fail to follow any rules, I will accept - without argument - the discipline the House Director or house staff deems appropriate. (This copy needs to be mailed back to the Restoration House with the completed application.)

Date _____

Witnessed by _____
(Institutional Counselor)

Witnessed by _____
(House Director, Staff, or Institutional Counselor)