COACH'S STUDY GUIDE

NAME: _____

UW SPORTS MINISTRY

SCHEDULE

MORNING: 9:00 - 12:15	MONDAY/TUESDAY/THURSDAY	**EVENING:** 5:00 - 8:15
8:15 - 8:55	Registration	4:15 - 4:55
9:00 - 9:15	Opening Rally	5:00 - 5:15
9:20 - 9:55	Sports Session #1	5:20 - 5:55
9:55 - 10:05	Coach's Huddle	5:55 - 6:05
10:05 - 10:40	Sports Session #2	6:05 - 6:40
10:40 - 11:05	Half Time Rally	6:40 - 7:05
11:10 - 11:40	Sports Session #3	7:10 - 7:40
11:45 - 12:10	Bible Time Rally	7:45 - 8:10
12:10 - 12:15	Final Whistle	8:10 - 8:15

MORNING: 9:00 - 12:15	WEDNESDAY	**EVENING:** 5:00 - 8:15
8:15 - 8:55	Registration	4:15 - 4:55
9:00 - 9:15	Opening Rally	5:00 - 5:15
9:20 - 9:50	Sports Session #1	5:20 - 5:50
9:50 - 10:00	Coach's Huddle	5:50 - 6:00
10:00 - 10:30	Sports Session #2	6:00 - 6:30
10:30 - 10:55	Half Time Rally	6:30 - 6:55
11:00 - 11:30	Sports Session #3	7:00 - 7:30
11:35 - 12:10	Bible Time Rally	7:35 - 8:10
12:10 - 12:15	Final Whistle	8:10 - 8:15

MORNING: 9:00 - 12:15	FRIDAY	**EVENING:** 5:00 - 8:15
8:15 - 8:55	Registration	4:15 - 4:55
9:00 - 9:15	Opening Rally	5:00 - 5:15
9:20 - 9:55	Sports Session #1	5:20 - 5:55
9:55 - 10:05	Coach's Huddle	5:55 - 6:05
10:05 - 10:40	Sports Session #2	6:05 - 6:40
10:40 - 11:05	Half Time Rally	6:40 - 7:05
11:10 - 11:35	Bible Time Rally	7:10 - 7:35
11:35 - 12:05	Sports Session #3	7:35 - 8:05
12:05 - 12:30	Final Whistle/Closing	8:05 - 8:30

INTRODUCTION

DEAR COACH,

In this study guide, you will find a 20-minute-per-day format for your spiritual preparation to be a volunteer at your church's sports camp. You can do this devotional in your own quiet time before your summer camp begins, or in your quiet time each day before you arrive at camp. It is vital that you come prepared each day. The 10 minutes that you spend with your team during Coach's Huddle may be the most important time you have each day with your campers.

When you prepare early, it will allow the Holy Spirit to direct you into a fuller understanding of the theme so that you can be a more effective leader. The important thing is that you prepare before you come to camp each day.

Here is a suggested guide for your **20-minute** preparation time:

- **3 minutes:** Work on the memory verse for the week.
- **3 minutes:** Reflect on the theme, Bible story, Key Points, and introduction for the day.
- **5 minutes:** Read the Scripture passages from the Bible story.
- **3 minutes:** Read and reflect on the Devotional Thought and Discussion Questions.
- **3 minutes:** Pray for your campers, as well as yourself, for what to say today.
- **3 minutes:** Review your personal Life Story for the Coach's Huddle.

MEMORY VERSE

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

MATTHEW 28:19-20a (NIV)

When the World Cup happens in June and July of 2026, billions around the world will tune in to watch on the internet and TV, and millions will attend the games in person. All eyes will be on the Americas as they host the World Cup. In 1930, the first FIFA World Cup event was held in Uruguay, with 13 countries participating. In 2026, the next World Cup will take place in North America, and teams from over 190 countries will have played preliminary matches around the world. The final 48 countries will play at venues throughout the US, Canada, and Mexico; it will be the largest World Cup tournament to date. The rules will be essentially the same as they were when they were written in 1863 – there are 17 *Laws of the Game*, and it is played the same all over the world.

When the *Laws of the Game* were written down in 1863, 163 years ago, the only way to share the game of soccer globally was to send people in boats around the world and export it, and that is exactly what happened. Great Britain invented the game and exported it around the world with the sailors and soldiers of their British military power. Remember the "sun never sets on the British Empire"?

2000 years ago, another world-changing event took place. Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection were and still are the ultimate game changers. His message of salvation can impact anyone on planet Earth. Billions have been given the choice to accept the offer of Jesus, and millions have accepted His offer of grace and an eternal home with Him. Let that sink in and read it again.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came from Heaven and lived on the earth for 33 years before He was crucified on a cross, buried in a tomb for three days, and then was raised back to life. He currently lives in Heaven with God the Father, but shares His life with ours through the Holy Spirit. Any human who desires or has desired to know Him and believe His message can have a personal relationship with God through Christ. Believers are called Christians ("little Christs"), and these people can be found in every country on earth today.

Psalm 19:7-8 says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes."

Jesus began teaching at the age of 30. He gave His followers precepts and wise truths to live by, much like FIFA's *Laws of the Game*, but in this instance, the "game of life". The metaphor of a team game played by certain rules will drive this curriculum. Jesus taught and spoke to His disciples about God's laws, statutes, precepts, and commands (Psalm 19:7-8) for the "game of life" during the three years He was with them. Then, just before He left the earth to go back to Heaven, He told His disciples to go and make more disciples of Him and teach those disciples to obey every command that Jesus had told them. The *Laws of the Game* Bible curriculum will attempt to help people understand what it takes to be a disciple of Jesus and to follow Him and His commands. Our memory verse found in the book of Matthew will be what Jesus said: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20a (NIV)

THE FIVE QUALITIES WE WILL STUDY INCLUDE:

1. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.
2. Love your neighbor as yourself
3. Repent
4. Follow Me
5. Love one another

INTRODUCTION

The *Laws of the Game* curriculum for sports camp will take an approach that identifies five of the original soccer (or football, as the game is known outside the US) Laws from how the game is played by great players from around the world. That player's story will be connected to one of the particular "*laws of the game* of life" as a current illustration of what Jesus spoke to all of His followers when He was here on earth. Following FIFA's Laws will help a player win soccer games in a fair manner. Following the laws, statutes, precepts, and commands of Jesus in the Bible will help a person live forever with the God who created everyone uniquely for unrivaled joy, both His and ours. The children, coaches, and family members who will hear these lessons will understand the power of a life lived by the "*laws of the game*" that God set up when He created us.

LESSON 1 - The campers will be introduced to the command that Jesus said was the most important of all, **"To love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind."** Campers will learn how this prioritizes everything we do in our lives, and that obeying God sets a course for heaven and eternity.

LESSON 2 - The campers will look at Jesus' command to **"love your neighbor as yourself."** Humanity is born with a sinful nature that will cause us to naturally love ourselves more than anyone else. Jesus' command to love other people (your neighbors) as much as you love yourself changes life's natural instincts. Team sports require you to love your teammates and your opponents as you love yourself.

LESSON 3 - This lesson highlights the idea that with God's help, you can change the direction of your life. When Jesus told people to **"repent"** early in His ministry, it was a call to change direction. The word repent means to turn, go another way, or think a different thing. When we realize that we need help to change our direction, we understand that we need to repent and make the decision to turn to Jesus.

LESSON 4 - This lesson emphasizes the command that Jesus gave to His disciples at the beginning of their relationship with Him: **"Follow Me."** He meant that they should learn from Him, act, and react like He did to things in life. By studying the life and words of Jesus, campers will know how they should "follow Jesus" and be like Him in their actions and words.

LESSON 5 - This lesson concludes the week with Jesus' command to His followers to **"Love one another."** Jesus knew that if those who follow Him demonstrate His kind of (sacrificial) love to each other, then non-believers would be able to identify His followers by their actions of love to each other, and it would be attractive to others who don't follow Jesus.

DAY	THEME	KEY POINTS	BIBLE STORY	SPORTS STORY
1	LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND	1. Playing by the rules of the game shows a love for the game. 2. Obeying the rules of God shows our love for Him.	JESUS CONFIRMS THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT (Matthew 22:34)	Bobby Jones calls a penalty on himself
2	LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF	1. Play like your opponent is you! 2. God wants us to sacrifice for others.	THE SECOND GREATEST COMMANDMENT (Matthew 22:39-40)	Women's Marathon - Rio de Janeiro 2016
3	REPENT	1. A small change can make a big difference. 2. God knows you and what changes you need.	JESUS PREACHES REPENTANCE (Acts 27)	Kylian Mbappé and Lionel Messi
4	FOLLOW ME	1. Your words should match your actions. 2. A follower of Jesus will speak and act like Him.	JESUS COMMANDS "FOLLOW ME" (Matthew 4:18-19)	Croatia Captain Luka Modrić inspires
5	LOVE ONE ANOTHER	1. Team players give up what they want for the good of the team. 2. Disciples of Jesus are known by their love for each other.	JESUS COMMANDS "LOVE ONE ANOTHER (John 13:34-35)	Lanny & Tracy Barnes demonstrate "love one another" at Olympics

DAY 1

SPORTS STORY: Bobby Jones calls a penalty on himself

BIBLE STORY: Jesus confirms the greatest commandment

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 22:34

KEY POINTS:

1. Playing by the rules of the game shows a love for the game.
2. Obeying the rules of God shows our love for Him.

LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND

INTRODUCTION:

Everyone has to learn to obey laws in their life. Cities, states, and countries all have laws, and even families have rules when you are growing up. There are rules, there are commands, and there are suggestions. Some are not so important to you and some are really important. The "*laws of the game* of life" were written down by God and spoken out loud by Jesus, God's own Son. Whoever invents the game gets to set the rules. God created man and determined what the important rules or commands of life would be. This week we will study some of Jesus' commands from the Bible. Following the commands of Jesus helps us to become more like Him.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

When Jesus preached His sermons about God His Father or about Himself being God's Son and the Messiah, He angered the Jewish religious leaders who did not believe He was God or God's son. They tried to discredit Him and embarrass Him so people would not follow Him. Today's lesson was about a trick question that someone asked Jesus in order to discredit Him. When we become followers of Jesus, God, and the Holy Spirit, there are people who will want to discredit us and make fun of us as Christians. Jesus responded to His detractors by quoting Scripture to them. Jesus knew the Scripture, so when questions were asked, He knew the answers. Scripture is our go-to for all of the "*laws of the game* of life."

SELF-EXAMINATION:

"Loving God with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our mind" seems like a big order. Life issues may make us feel like we don't have time to love God, or we may think, "I don't know enough about Him" or "I don't know if I will like what He asks me to do." We may tend to make excuses because we are not sure we will like the answers God has in His Word, but Jesus came that we might have life and a life that is abundant (John 10:10). Take a moment today to restate your love for God and talk about Him throughout your day, so that a long conversation with Him can take place. When your head hits the pillow, all you have to do is say goodnight… and you know that you have talked to Him all day! Oh, and He never sleeps, so you can talk to Him anytime!

COACH'S HUDDLE TIME:

The primary purpose here is to relate an age-appropriate story from your own life. Your story will deepen your relationship with your team.

LIFE STORY:

Tell a life story (age-appropriate for the group you are with) about a time when you realized God had done something for you and you told Him you loved Him and thanked Him for what He did for you. If possible, share about a time when you remember being grateful that He is in your life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why should we love God?
2. When do we normally talk to God?
3. Do we have to talk out loud to God?
4. Does God hear our thoughts?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Kolter plays soccer in *League United* for a team named after the country of Liberia in Africa. In one of his games, Kolter was trying to get the ball away from someone on the other team and the referee blew his whistle and said that Kolter had fouled the person on the other team. Kolter did not think he had done anything wrong. If Kolter loves the game of soccer, how should he react? If Kolter only loves himself, how would he react? (See Key Point #1 on the previous page.)

OVERTIME:

Still have extra time after the questions and story? Use this time to get to know your team. Come up with a team handshake, cheer, etc. to help the campers work together. This will also help you see which campers on your team are leaders, might need some extra encouragement, or who you might need to keep an eye on!

DAY 2

SPORTS STORY: Women's Marathon - Rio de Janeiro 2016

BIBLE STORY: The second greatest commandment

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 22:39-40

KEY POINTS:

1. Play like your opponent is you!
2. God wants us to sacrifice for others.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF

INTRODUCTION:

It is difficult for everyone to love their neighbor as themselves. We only truly know ourselves. We cannot get inside other people's heads. The only person who knows our thoughts is God, so when Jesus said to love your neighbor (other people) as yourself, He knew it was a command that would be difficult to execute. Our natural instinct is to love ourselves and get our way whenever we want it. Loving others is something we need help doing! Jesus came to create a way to have a personal relationship with God, so that God could live inside us and help us love others. When you are a Christian, God in His Spirit takes up residence inside us to help us make good decisions and see people the way God their Creator sees them. God loves everyone, even the obstinate person that lives down your street who you can't stand.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was, He said the commandment that we talked about yesterday: to love God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind. Then He continued on to name the second most important command: to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus did not say love only those you like; He said to love your neighbor, meaning everyone who is near you in life. This includes those who you see at work, or school, or in your neighborhood. Jesus knew that the only way a person could actually follow that command is with help from God.

SELF-EXAMINATION:

Take a few minutes right now to think of the people whom you interact with daily. The ones who are hard to get along with, the one who thinks more of him- or herself than you, the one who is someone you call a friend. Take a few moments to talk to God about these people, name them to God and describe them to Him. Ask for help to understand them, help to serve them, and help to speak graciously to them…then take a few minutes to thank God for the friends you know who encourage you, lift you up, and speak kindly to you.

COACH'S HUDDLE TIME:

The primary purpose here is to relate an age-appropriate story from your own life. Your story will deepen your relationship with your team.

LIFE STORY:

Tell a life story (age-appropriate for the group you are with) about a time when you had trouble getting along with someone and how God helped you see something positive in them or how God helped you deal with them in a loving way.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Think of three of your good friends. What do you like about them?
2. Think of someone you don't get along with - we don't need to name names! What don't you like?
3. In your class at school, what can you do to try and get along with someone?
4. In your family, how can you love your neighbor as yourself?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Amelia is having trouble getting along with the older girls on her cheer squad. She is small and always has to be the "flyer." The older girls seem to only be interested in their friends and don't talk much to her. What can Amelia do to improve the situation? How can God help Amelia? Does God actually care about Amelia and her feeling of rejection?

OVERTIME:

Still have extra time after the questions and story? Review the memory verse for the week, Matthew 28:19-20a (NIV), which can be found on page 2 of this study guide. Your team coaches should have introduced the verse with motions. Encourage the kids to memorize the first part of verse 19: "*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations…*"

DAY 3

SPORTS STORY: Kylian Mbappé and Lionel Messi

BIBLE STORY: Jesus preaches repentance

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 4:17

KEY POINTS:

1. A small change can make a big difference.
2. God knows you and what changes you need.

REPENT

INTRODUCTION:

As the first Key Point today says, a small change can make a big difference. In soccer, a quick movement of a couple of inches could make a big difference in advancing the ball toward the goal. Everyone is faced with decisions every day of their life, from what to eat, to where to go, to what to do, and a thousand more possible questions regarding the direction you will go. Changing direction could be positive if you choose wisely, or it could start you down a road of destruction in your life. The counsel of God is one of the ways you can help the odds of making a better decision when change is necessary. Like our second Key Point says, God knows you and what changes you need. So why not ask Him?

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

Without an understanding of God and who He is and how He works, people are on their own in forging a direction in life. The non-physical part of every human, your spirit and soul, guide all the decisions you make when you are in charge of your life. God gave humans families to be born into so that they can learn about how to navigate life. Ultimately, everyone must make their own choices about where to go, whom to be with, and whose advice to follow. Jesus came to earth to give humans a plan to change direction towards God. His call for people to repent (go a different direction) towards God, not away from Him, is the call of salvation that will be given today at Bible time.

SELF-EXAMINATION:

As you reflect on your conversion story, answer the following questions in light of your choice of repenting and becoming a Christian. Your story should include:

- What direction were you going before that decision?
- What kind of changes did you need to make when you made the decision to accept Jesus as your Savior?
- Who continued to help you change direction?
- What children on your team do you know have not turned to Jesus yet?

Spend a little time praying for your team and ask God to help them repent and go Jesus' direction in their life.

COACH'S HUDDLE TIME:

The primary purpose here is to relate an age-appropriate story from your own life. Your story will deepen your relationship with your team.

LIFE STORY:

Tell your story (age-appropriate for the group you are with) of becoming a Christian. Emphasize any one or more of the following aspects of your conversion story:

- What was something that you knew you had to change to become a Christian?
- Do you find it easy or challenging to be open about your faith?
- Had others in your family made the decision to follow Jesus, and that encouraged you to go in the same direction?
- Was there something that you learned at church that made you know you needed to change?
- Did the timing seem right because the offer of salvation finally made sense to you?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why was Jesus saying the people He preached to (Jewish people) needed to repent and go a different direction?

Answer: Because Jesus was sent by God to make a new way to be saved. In the Old Testament, the only way to be saved was to trust the God of the Jews - you had to trust the God that the Jews worshipped. Jesus, the Son of God, came to make a new way for everyone to be saved and to come to God. You had to trust Jesus and you needed to repent from your old ways and change.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Brice and Carter are best friends in school and they play basketball on their school team. Their teammates are not as good at basketball as they are and when their team has the ball, Brice and Carter usually control the play. After a close game, which they lost, Carter said to Brice, "We need to only pass to each other so we can win the games." Brice doesn't think that is how they should play, but he doesn't know what to do and the next game is tomorrow. What should Brice do? What would you do? Should Brice play like Carter says or play team ball like the coach says?

OVERTIME:

Still have extra time after the questions and story? Review the memory verse for the week, Matthew 28:19-20a (NIV), which can be found on page 2 of this study guide. Your team coaches should have introduced the verse with motions. Encourage the kids to memorize verse 19: *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*

DAY 4

SPORTS STORY: Croatia Captain Luka Modrić inspires

BIBLE STORY: Jesus commands "Follow Me"

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 4:18-19

KEY POINTS:

1. Your words should match your actions.
2. A follower of Jesus will speak and act like Him.

FOLLOW ME

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus wants everyone to repent of their sins, but He also wants them to live their life trying to follow or imitate Him and how He lived. He wants Christians to live a life that would show people that God is evident in how they live their life. Their words should match their actions, and the result would be people living life like Jesus, just like He taught His disciples to do. When you follow Jesus, you are obeying His commands and you are being a good disciple of Jesus. We don't want disciples of ourselves - we want to help encourage people to be followers/disciples of Jesus.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

In Jewish tradition, young men would find a good Jewish Rabbi or Teacher and then follow them, learn what they knew about life, learn what the Old Testament taught about God and what the Old Testament said about following God's ways in their life. Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth to change the religious equation. He would become the focal point of the new way to salvation. You did not have to be Jewish, you had to become a follower of Jesus, God's Son, and live your life according to what Jesus said and did. That is how you become a mature Christian - by following Jesus.

SELF-EXAMINATION:

Because our lives are lived in a series of days that add up to weeks, months, and years, the most important way we can truly live a certain way is to daily follow Jesus. In Luke 9:23, Jesus actually said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." Jesus said around 50 things that were commands to follow if you want to live like him. Five of those commands make up our five Bible lessons (and daily themes) this week.

COACH'S HUDDLE TIME:

LIFE STORY:

Tell a story (age-appropriate for the group you are with) of how you know you are living for Jesus and trying to be a follower and disciple of Him. Include the actions you take each day or each week to improve your walk with Jesus and how you follow Him. Examples might include reading your Bible, connecting with other Christians, or listening to sermons or podcasts about being a better Christian. Talk about church and why it is important to make connections with other people at church.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Ask these questions and record an answer to them for each child on your team.

1. Do you have a Bible that is yours?
2. Do you read it by yourself, or with your family?
3. Do you go to church anywhere each Sunday?
4. Do you hear about God anywhere else, like school or League United or Vacation Bible School?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

The coach of Nova's girls' basketball team has asked her to be the captain of the team. Nova is committed to the team and loves playing. She is selfless and yet scores a lot of the team's points because her skills have been worked on privately with her parents. She is a Christ-follower and goes to church regularly. Should Nova say yes or no to being captain of the team? Explain your answer.

OVERTIME:

Hand out "Connect Cards" to each camper. These cards are intended to gather more information about each camper's walk with Christ so that the church can follow up with them and their families after camp.

Walk campers through and explain the different checkbox options:

1. I'm still learning and have questions about Jesus. *(For campers who haven't yet accepted Jesus as their Savior and want to know more about what it means to be a Christian.)*
2. I accepted Jesus as my Savior yesterday. *(For campers who made the decision at camp yesterday to accept Jesus as their Savior!)*
3. I have accepted Jesus as my Savior before. *(For campers who have previously accepted Jesus as their Savior!)*
4. I want to follow Jesus more every day. *(For campers who are ready to put Jesus' command - "Follow Me" - into practice, and to live more for Him every day. This is a life-long process for all Christians! This box may be checked along with another option above.)*

Collect the cards and return them to your camp director.

OVERTIME:

Still have extra time after the questions and story? Review the memory verse for the week, Matthew 28:19-20a (NIV), which can be found on page 2 of this study guide. Coach's Huddle is the perfect time to allow campers to practice and say the memory verse to earn their memory verse pin!

DAY 5

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

SPORTS STORY: Lanny & Tracy Barnes demonstrate "love one another" at Olympics

BIBLE STORY: Jesus commands "love one another"

SCRIPTURE: John 13:34-35

KEY POINTS:

1. Team players give up what they want for the good of the team.
2. Disciples of Jesus are known by their love for each other.

INTRODUCTION:

On the night before Jesus died on the cross, He had a final meal with His disciples. This would be His last chance to talk with them, and He knew it was going to be tough for a few days before He saw them again after His resurrection from the dead. One of the things He said that night was something He wanted them to do as long as they lived, even if He was not there. Jesus knew that if these disciples loved each other just as He loved them, it would show others that following Jesus would be the best way to live. Loving someone means sacrificing for them, caring for them, or giving up what you want for what the other person wants. Our second Key Point today says: disciples of Jesus are known by their love for each other.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT:

If someone watched you and your friends, would they know you were a Christ-follower by how you treated your friends? The word Jesus used was a Greek word for love that meant a sacrificial love. If you give up what you want for someone else to have it, that is sacrificial love. Most parents understand this kind of love. When you are a parent, you are giving up things you want to do for the things your children want to do. You are going to work and spending time working so your children can have food, clothes, toys, and housing. Parents understand sacrificial love.

SELF-EXAMINATION:

Constantly evaluating your progress and making adjustments as disciples of Jesus will take every follower of Jesus the rest of their days on earth. There is no one who does it perfectly. As you evaluate your discipleship to Jesus, check things like the following:

- How often do you read the Bible?
- How often do you study the Bible (like reading commentaries written about the words of the Bible)?
- How often do you pray and attend a church and interact with fellow Christians?
- Are you serving in some capacity to help teach others about Jesus?
- Are you regularly seeking wisdom from other Christians who are older and more mature in their faith?

COACH'S HUDDLE TIME:

The primary purpose here is to relate an age-appropriate story from your own life. Your story will deepen your relationship with your team.

LIFE STORY:

Tell a life story (age-appropriate for the group you are with) about a person who sacrificed for you because they loved you; someone who gave up something they wanted so you could have what you wanted. Sacrificial love can happen at any time in a person's life. Children can love sacrificially, teenagers can love sacrificially, adults of all ages can love sacrificially. Usually, the story is about someone older who sacrifices for the younger, but that is not always true.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does someone love God with all their heart and all their soul and all their mind?
2. How does someone love their neighbor as themselves?
3. How does someone repent?
4. How does someone follow Jesus?
5. How does someone love one another?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Moriah and Jeremina were on the same team at sports camp and they knew each other a little bit from school. You (their coach) saw their friendship blossom at sports camp. Both girls gave up their pride and sacrificed some of their precious time and other friends to give their new friendship a chance. They found a common ground in their love of Jesus and their love of helping others in the cheer squad. How can you as a "church coach" encourage them to grow closer to Jesus together?

OVERTIME:

Still have extra time after the questions and story? Write a personal post card to each member of your team and encourage them in their journey. Review the memory verse for the week. Review the different themes from the week. Talk about some of the activities the church might have for them throughout the summer and school year, and invite them to come back on Sunday!

COACH'S NOTES

TEAM NAME: _____

MY TEAM MEMBERS: **MEMORY VERSE:**

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NOTES:

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DAY 1: Key Point #1: Playing by the rules of the game shows a love for the game.

Rules of a game bring structure and strength to the game's participants. Measuring your ability or your team's ability in a structured activity that has rules will bring competition to its idealistic conclusion-fair competition within the rules that makes everyone better. Iron sharpens iron when both are at the same strength with the same limitations. In practice, create healthy well-outlined games of competition between teammates, and they will thrive and grow closer. People who walk in church together trying to love God with all their hearts will find more strength together than apart.

DAY 2: Key Point #1: Play like your opponent is you!

Having high expectations and being willing to help people succeed will blossom when you love them as you would want to be loved and challenged. When you do your best for the Lord without expecting praise from those who you are with, it will be noticed and copied. You would not give up on a goal and others won't either when your attitude and energy can be shared. Loving your neighbor as yourself can help others to be buoyed by your kindness when your effort is strong and focused on pleasing God and not man.

DAY 3: Key Point #1: A small change can make a big difference.

Owning up to our weaknesses, saying the words, "I am sorry", and holding back the negative thought that could turn into a comment are actions that confirm that in sports and in life, a small change can make a big difference. What if you did not call out the mistake but worked behind the scenes to correct it without anyone but God knowing it was you? Offering what the other person needs, rather than giving what you want to give, takes wisdom, perception, and slowing down enough to pray through a situation. What if the need was a prayer and not a comment?

DAY 4: Key Point #1: Your words should match your actions.

When credibility is on the line, words need to match your actions. Jesus said that He was God's Son and He and His Father are one! The miracles, the teaching, and the life lived all supported His message: the lame walked, the blind could see, and the mute could speak. As believers engage in children's sports, our actions as coaches and administrators must be in alignment with our words. Doing our best to represent Jesus and God in a secular activity and telling the truth from God's Word puts great pressure on the Christian to live out the words they speak in their actions and involvement.

DAY 5: Key Point #1: Team players give up what they want for the good of the team.

Loving one another is a key visible attribute by which Jesus said the world would know His followers. Sports puts all its participants on display. Players, coaches, referees, fans, administrators, and family can all see that this Christian league, camp or clinic is about God somehow. Words can help define the goal, and smiles and tears can draw emotion into the moment, but loving one another as disciples of Jesus will be the lasting marker and remembered for the difference in this "program" and the non-church equivalent forever.

Blessings,
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