

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
SOCCER DEVOTIONS

4-9 year olds

Week 2

Love

Love

The objective is the goal or main teaching point of this week's study. If you convey one thing to your players, make it this.

Read this passage aloud to the kids, as it will be the focus of this week's study. Each week's memory verse will be in bold.

Here is where we will discuss today's passage with the players. This can be read off the page or summarized and explained in the coach's own words.

Objective This study will show that Christ is the reason we love others and the example of how we should love them.

Scripture Passage:

"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**"

1 John 4:9-11 (memory verse, 1 John 4:11, **in bold**)

In the Word

Last week, we learned that the fruit of the Spirit describes what a Christian's life should look like. The first fruit is love, so as Christians we know we are supposed to love God and other people (see Mark 12:30-31). But that's not easy. It's hard to make ourselves love someone. Think of your least favorite food. Can you decide one day, "I'm going to like this food now"? That usually doesn't work. It's even harder to do that with people. Almost all of us know at least one person who is difficult to love.

The problem is that we usually want to treat people the way they treat us, so when someone is unloving us, we don't want to show love to them. But the Bible says that love doesn't start with us. Love starts with Jesus. Last week we saw all the amazing things Jesus did to save us. He left heaven to come to earth, suffered, and died on the cross for our sins, then rose again on the third day. He did all of that for us to save us and show us that He loves us. If Jesus loves us that much, then according to our memory verse, we should love others.

Jesus is not just the reason we love others. He is the example too. Think about all the ways Jesus loved us. He loved us even when we didn't love Him back. He loved us even though we didn't deserve it. He loved us even if it meant He would have to suffer. He loved us with His words. He

In the Word (Continued)

loved us with His actions. He treated us better than He treated Himself. And He never stopped loving us. When we don't know how we should love someone, all we have to do is look at Jesus and do what He did. We can love others with words and actions that help and bless them, even if they don't deserve it or don't love us back. Loving others might require something difficult or painful for us, but that's how Jesus loved us.

As we have seen, loving people is hard, especially when they don't love us back. But remember, love is a fruit of the *Spirit*. You don't have to try to love people on your own. The Holy Spirit helps you! When we are struggling to love those who are hard to love, the Holy Spirit empowers us with a supernatural love that comes from Him, not us. We may not be able to love people on our own, but God can love anyone through us.

"On the Field" gives some in-game situations where today's lesson can be applied, while "Off the Field" gives examples from everyday life. Encourage them to do the things you listed during the game today.

On the Field

- During a game, there will be someone who is difficult to love: an opponent, a teammate, a ref. We are told not just to put up with them, but to actively love them. Look for ways you can help and show kindness to someone, even when it's hard.
- Acts of love on the soccer field can include encouraging words, helping people up when they fall, congratulating them, giving others a chance to play, and more. See how many ways you can come up with.

Off the Field

- Think of a person in your life that is difficult to love. Make a plan of how to show love to that person this week.
- Loving your family is more than just doing what you're supposed to (chores). Do something you don't have to do just to show love, such as making a meal or cleaning a parent or sibling's room for them.
- Be on the lookout for people who don't get a lot of love and find ways to show them love.

These are some final notes/goals to accomplish this week. These are not meant to be read, but are instructions for the coach.

The Game Plan

1. Review last week's memory verse, Galatians 5:22-23. Give a ticket to any player who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize 1 John 4:11 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. Take note of loving actions you notice in your players this week and point them out to the rest of the team.
4. Have your team be on the lookout for people who need some extra love this week and find ways to love those people.