

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
SOCCER DEVOTIONS

4-9 year olds

Week 3

By Your Love

By Your 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 teach the kids how our love for others identifies us as believers and show them what Christian love, as seen in Christ, looks like.

Scripture Passage:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**"

John 13:34-35 (Memory Verse, John 13:35, in **bold**)

In the Word

When you play soccer, how can you tell who's on your team and who's on the other team? The uniforms. When you see someone with the same uniform as you, you know that player is on your team and it's safe to pass them the ball. But if they're wearing a different uniform, you know that you need to avoid that player.

Now just as we can tell which team a soccer player is on by the uniform they wear, Jesus said that there's a way to tell who His disciples are. It's not by how they dress or what they look like. It's not even that they go to church or read the Bible, though those are both important things. In John 13:34-35, Jesus said that the world will be able to know who His disciples are by our love for one another.

But is Jesus saying that only Christians love other people? No, I'm sure many of have unbelieving friends and family members who love you. But what makes Christians different is the way we love. In verse 34, Jesus tells us to love one another *as He has loved us*. Christians love others by following the example of how Christ loves people.

So then how do we love others as Christ loves us? Christ's love was self-sacrificial. He didn't just help people when it was convenient for Him. He put people's needs before His own and treated others as better than Himself. He even gave His own life for us, dying on the cross to pay for our sins. When you give up something that you wanted for someone else, or you spend your time to help others, you are following Christ's example.

In the Word (Continued)

Jesus also set an example for us in who He loved. He wasn't just nice to His friends and family. He loved strangers, the poor, people who sinned a lot, and even His enemies. He loved people who didn't love Him back and helped those who could do nothing for Him in return. As Christians, we also are commanded to love people who are difficult to love, such as a brother or sister, or someone at school you don't get along with.

Following Jesus' example of love is very difficult. In fact, if we try to do it on our own, we'll find that it's impossible. We need Jesus to help us love others by giving us His love. The good news is that we can pray and ask him to help us, and He will come and fill our hearts with His love so that we can follow His example. It won't be easy, but if we want to be Christ's disciple, we must show it by our love.

"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

- Love your teammates by looking for ways to bless them. It can be as simple as getting a ball for someone, giving some tips to a player who needs help, or asking how you can pray for them.
- You might not want to love your opponents today, but they are your brothers and sisters in Christ. Show them kindness with your words and actions, no matter how the game goes.
- Respecting and obeying your coaches and the refs is another great way to show love.

Off the Field

- Is there someone who is difficult for you to love? Think of something kind you can say to them or do for them to show them love.
- Sometimes our families can be the hardest people to love. Obey your parents/guardians with a good attitude and be kind to your siblings.
- Jesus is our ultimate example of love. To learn how to love others as Jesus has loved us, read about Him in His Word.

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, Matthew 16:25, "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it." Give a ticket to any player who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize John 13:35 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. Have the players think of someone that is difficult for them to love. Brainstorm ways to show love to those who are unloving to us, and then pray and ask Jesus to help them love these people.