

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY BASKETBALL DEVOTIONS

10-18 year olds

Week 4

In Love

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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.

Our lessons for our older age groups are designed to be more discussion-based. This section is for the coach to read ahead of time so that he/she understands the goal of the discussion and is able to direct the conversation.

Objective This lesson will teach the kids that Christians love God and others self-sacrificially and through our actions.

Scripture Passage:

“By this we know love, because He [Jesus] laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.”

1 John 3:16-18 (Memory verse, 1 John 3:16, in **bold**)

Coaches Guide

Today we are looking at the topic of Christian love. Jesus said that loving God and loving others are the two most important commands in the Bible (Mark 12:30-31). Our world today has a lot of confusion about what love truly means, but in His Word, Jesus shows us what real love is. If we want to understand how to love, we should look at His example.

1 John 3:16 gives us the extent of Christ's love: laying down His life and dying for us. The same way, we need to be self-sacrificial in the way that we love others. Most of us will never have to go to the extreme of giving up our lives, but in order to love others, we must be willing to put others and their interests, needs, and desires before our own. We should be willing to sacrifice our own good for the sake of others.

Verses 17-18 says that our love must be in deed (shown through our actions) and in truth (genuine in our hearts). Jesus' love for humanity was demonstrated, not only in His death, but by His actions in the way He treated, spoke to, and helped people in His life. If we want to love God and others, we must show it with our actions. Words aren't enough.

But how do we love God with our actions? Of course we can do things like read the Bible, pray, or go to church, but our verses say that one way we show our love for God is by the way we treat others. When we help those in need or put people before ourselves, Jesus said it's like doing those things for Him (Matthew 25:31-46). But verse 17 says that we can't say we love God if we ignore the needs of those around us.

Team discussion gives questions to ask your team in order to discuss today's topic. Use the information from the coaches guide to steer the conversation toward the biblical truth.

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

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

Team Discussion

1. When you hear the word "love," what do you think of? How would you define love? What are some ways our world today defines love? What does the Bible say that love is?
2. Who is the ultimate example of love? How did Jesus love others in His life and death? What does the way that Jesus loved people teach us about how we should love others?
3. What does it mean to love self-sacrificially? Is our verse saying that we have to actually give up our lives in order to love someone? Have you ever had to give up something you wanted for someone else ?
4. What does it mean to love "in deed and in truth"? How can we show that we love God through our actions?

On the Court

- No matter what the score is or how your feeling, make sure that the way you speak to and treat your teammates, opponents, refs, and coaches is with love, kindness, and respect.
- Ask your coach for ways you can help them out. Even little things like cleaning up after the game can make a big difference.
- Encourage and thank the refs this week. It's not something that they hear often.

Off the Court

- Help those who are in need. For example, you could rake leaves or shovel snow for a neighbor, or help a younger brother or sister with their homework.
- Put the needs and wants of others before your own. Instead of trying to please yourself, look for ways to bless others.
- Sometimes parents/guardians and siblings can be the hardest people to love. Think of ways to show love to the people in your family this week.

The Game Plan

1. Review last week's memory verse, Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Give a ticket to any player who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize 1 John 3:16 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. Challenge your team to show their love for God and others, on and off the court, through their actions. Have them think of ways they can help someone in need.