

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY  
SOCCER DEVOTIONS

**4-9 year olds**

Week 5

*Sincere Love*

# Sincere 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 lesson will show that Christian love means loving the Lord zealously and loving others sincerely and above ourselves.

## Scripture Passage:

**“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.”**

Romans 12:9-11, NIV (Memory Verse, Romans 12:9-10, **in bold**)

## In the Word

As Christians, we know that we are supposed to love, how do we do that? The word “love” means so many things. I can say, “I love the Lord,” “I love my family,” or “I love pizza,” but the word love means something very different in each of those examples. There is a lot of confusion in our world about what love is. Thankfully, here in Romans 12:9-11 Paul explains what true, biblical love looks like.

The first questions we need to answer is, who do we love? In Mark 12:30-31, Jesus tells us the two most important commands in the whole Bible are loving the Lord and loving your neighbor (the people around you). While these may seem like two different commands, the truth is you can't do one without the other. In today's verses, Paul goes back and forth between showing us how to love God and how to love others.

Loving God means hating what is evil and loving what is good. Your parents probably tell you not to say that you hate other people, but one thing you should hate is sin because God hates it. Not only should we hate sin, but we should cling to what is good. Both are necessary. We can't just avoid doing bad things without doing good, or mix doing good with sin. Verse 11 says that we also love God by serving Him with great fervor and zeal. This is a fancy way of saying that we work hard to serve the Lord and really care about Him. The same way athletes work hard and give their best when they play their sport, we ought to give all of our energy and passion in serving the Lord.

## In the Word (Continued)

To love others, we must love sincerely, or as one version of the Bible puts it, without hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is when you say one thing but do something else. If your teammate told you to pass the ball more but didn't pass it himself, that would be hypocrisy. The same way, we can't just say that we love people. Our actions have to match. And what should those loving actions look like? Verse 10 says that loving others means putting them above yourself. That means that we think about what is best for others and work hard to make that happen. If you and your friend can't agree on what to do, let them pick. If you and your friend both want the same treat, let them have it. If we have sincere love for others, this is what it will look like. We won't just say that we love them, but we will actually treat them better than we treat ourselves.

"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 sincerely. Don't just tell them that you care about them, but actively look for ways that you can treat them better than yourself.
- In soccer, hating evil means rejecting pride, selfishness, and mistreatment of teammates and opponents. Instead, cling to good things. Give God the glory, treat others as better than yourself, and be kind and encouraging to the other players.

### Off the Field

- Think about a sin you struggle with. Rather than just trying not to do that thing (hating evil), think of a good thing to replace it with. For example, if you struggle with saying unkind things, try looking for ways to use your words to encourage.
- Choose someone in your life who is difficult to love. Plan a way you can treat them better than you treat yourself this week.

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, Romans 12:5 (NIV), "So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." Give a ticket to anyone who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize Romans 12:9-10 (NIV) with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. According to Mark 12:30-31, the Christian life can be summed up in four words: love God, love people. The key ideas we want to convey to the kids today are what biblical love for God and what biblical love for others look like.