

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
SOCCER DEVOTIONS

10-17 year olds

Week 7

Anything Excellent or Praiseworthy

Anything Excellent or Praiseworthy

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 study will teach the kids that being a Christian is not just not sinning, but seeking things that matter to God.

Scripture Passage:

"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.**"

Colossians 3:1-2 (Memory verse, Colossians 3:2, in **bold**)

Coaches Guide

A lot of times, we define Christianity as things we don't do. People see Christians as people who don't lie, cheat, or steal, and that's all good, but Christianity is about more than just avoiding sin, but about seeking the things Philippians 4:8 calls, "excellent," and, "praiseworthy."

So what things are excellent or praiseworthy? Colossians 3:1-2 gives the answer by describing two types of things: things on the earth and things above. Things on the earth include bad things like sin, but also good things that God has given us to enjoy like food or sports. These things are fine, but there are some things that are even more important: things above. There are things that are of value not just here and now, but for all eternity in heaven, such as time with the Lord, godly character, and sharing your faith. The way to test if something is a "thing above" is to ask yourself, "Will this matter when I get to heaven?" We want to spend our time doing things that would answer "yes" to that question.

We all know that Satan wants to tempt us to sin, but sometimes he takes a different approach. Rather than getting us to do something bad, he tries to keep us content and distracted by good things such as sports or time with friends so that we miss out on the excellent things God has for us (for example, when winning a game matters more than honoring the Lord). Those things aren't bad in their right place, but they must never keep us from excellent things. As believers, we want to set our mind on excellent and praiseworthy things, the things that really matter to God.

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 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.

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. How would you describe the Christian life? Is it just about things we don't do, or is there more to it?
2. What do you think Colossians 3:1-2 mean by "things above," and "things on the earth"?
3. What sort of things are "things above"? How can you tell if something is of eternal value?
4. Is there a way that Satan can use the good things God gave us to keep us from things that are excellent or praiseworthy? For example, how can competition like playing soccer distract you from "things above"?

On the Field

- It's good to try to win the game, but make sure that winning doesn't distract you from honoring the Lord.
- The respect you show the referee is far more important than getting the call to go your way.
- Devotion time is not time to goof off. Time in God's Word is why we are here in this soccer league. Make sure to take it seriously so that you don't miss out on what God might want to say to you.

Off the Field

- What sort of things distract you from spending time with the Lord? Whether they are sinful or not, don't let them keep you from things that are excellent.
- Make sure your time with friends has eternal value. With you believing friends, talk about what the Lord is doing in your life. With unbelievers, share Christ.
- It's easy to look at going to Church as something you have to do, but remember that when we worship God, we are doing something that truly matters.

The Game Plan

1. Review last week's memory verse, Proverbs 22:1, "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favor rather than silver and gold." Give a ticket to anyone who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize Colossians 3:2 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. Have the kids share things they have learned about the Lord and ways they have grown as Christians this season. Explain to them how this is far better than any wins or losses you may have experienced this season.