

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY BASKETBALL DEVOTIONS

10-18 year olds

Week 7

Love Your Neighbor

Love Your Neighbor

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 To show the players that if we want to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, we need to love others as we love ourselves.

Scripture Passage:

"Jesus answered, "The most important is, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." **The second is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.**"

Mark 12:29-31 (Memory Verse, Mark 12:31, in **bold**)

Coaches Guide

All year, we have looked at what Jesus said was the most important thing a person can do: love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Today, we will look at the next most important commandment, loving your neighbor (which simply refers to the people around us) as yourself. According to Jesus, we can sum up everything the Bible says about how we are supposed to live in these two commandments.

The Bible talks about loving others many times, but here Jesus tells us how far to go in our love: as we love ourselves. When we think about how much we love ourselves, that is a pretty high standard. We are usually willing to do a lot to make ourselves comfortable and happy. Think about how often you try to work things to get your own way or make sure that your interests and needs are met. Now imagine working that hard to make sure others are taken care of.

It's important to show that these two commands are connected. You can't have one without the other. Someone who doesn't love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength has no ability to love their neighbors as themselves. Likewise, anyone who doesn't love their neighbor is not loving God either.

If we are serious about wanting to honor and please God, it will show in our love for others. Jesus said the world will know that we are His disciples by the love we have for one another. Loving our neighbor is central to what it means to be a Christian.

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. Why do you think Jesus says the second-most important commandment is to love your neighbor? Who is our "neighbor"?
2. What is the extent to which we should love others? What does it mean to love your neighbor "as yourself"?
3. What sort of things can we do to show love to our parents/guardians? Siblings? Friends? Teachers? Teammates? Opponents?
4. Are these two most important commandments related? How? Why do you think Jesus puts them together? Is it possible to do one without the other?
5. What are some situations in your life where it is hard to love your neighbor? How can you love those people as you love yourself?

On the Court

- Don't play selfishly and hog the ball. Put the wants and needs of your teammates above your own, and give everyone a chance to compete.
- Speak to the refs the way you want them to speak to you: with kindness and respect.
- Your opponents are your brothers and sisters in Christ. Even though you are competing against one another, you still need to show love and kindness.

Off the Court

- Put others before yourself. If you and someone else want the same thing, let them have it.
- Help someone who needs it, such as helping an elderly neighbor with their yard.
- You may have a friend or family member who is going through a tough time right now. Pray for them and look for ways to show them love or do something kind for them.

The Game Plan

1. Review last week's memory verse, Colossians 3:23, "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men." Give a ticket to anyone who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize Mark 12:31 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. Put an emphasis today on the way you treat other people. Note how your team acts towards one another, their coaches, their opponents, the referees, and the spectators.