Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY SOCCER DEVOTIONS

4-9 year olds

Week 9

Draw Near to God

Draw Near to God

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.

Objective

This lesson will present the Gospel message to the players, showing that they can repent of their sins and turn to Christ for forgiveness.

Read this passage aloud to the kids, as it will be the focus of this week's study. If multiple verses are given, this week's memory verse will be in bold.

Scripture Passage:

"Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

James 4:8 (ESV)

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.

In the Word

All year, we have looked at the wisdom God has given us in the book of James. We learned about being quick to listen, being doers of the Word, not showing favoritism, controlling our tongues, humility, patience, and prayer. When we follow God's wisdom in these areas of our lives, we will avoid many problems. Today, however, we are going to learn about the biggest problem any of us face and the solution to that problem.

James 4:8 tells us to draw near to God because every human who has ever lived has had the same problem: separation from God. That's not because God is trying to get away from us, but because of what we've done to separate ourselves from Him. And what is it that separates us from God? Our sin. Sin is anything we think, say, or do that goes against what God tells us to do. That includes things like lying, taking things that don't belong to you, disobeying your parents, and saying unkind things to others, plus a lot more. Even on that short list, I'm sure we can all see that we do things that God says are wrong all the time. Because of our sin, the Bible says that we deserve to be separated from God forever.

That all sounds like pretty bad news, but there is good news too! God didn't want to be separated from us, so He made a way for us to be together again forever. He sent His Son Jesus to be born on this earth as a human. Jesus lived a perfect life, never sinning once, yet He was killed as a criminal, not for His own sins since He didn't have any, but for ours. He took our punishment by dying on the cross, but then He rose again on the

In the Word (Continued)

third day, defeating death. Now He's in heaven, preparing a place to be with us forever if we draw near to Him.

So how do we draw near to God? The second part of the verse tells us what to do. It says that as sinners, we need to cleanse our hands. He doesn't mean washing with soap and water though. James is talking about washing our lives from sin. When we draw near to God, it means we are moving away from our sin. We are choosing to do what God wants to do, not what we want to do. This is called repentance. We can draw near to God by admitting we are sinners, asking Jesus to forgive our sins, and making Him our Lord (Master) and Savior. When we do that, he draws near to us and forgives our sins, and we get to spend eternity in heaven with God.

"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

- Unbelievers play soccer in a way to make themselves feel and look good, but we as believers should make our main goal to honor the Lord on the field.
- Are there ways you are sinning in the way you play soccer? Repent of those sins and draw near to God.
- When we are tempted to make a bad decision during a game, we can draw near to God, knowing He will draw near to us and help us.

Off the Field

- If you have never asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior, draw near to Him and ask Him to forgive your sins.
- Drawing near God is something we are to do throughout our whole lives. Reading the Bible and praying are some of the best ways to do that.
- Tell any friends or family who don't believe in Jesus that they can draw near to God and have their sins forgiven.

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, James 5:16 (NIV). Give a ticket to any player who can recite it.
2. Because this is the last week, there is no memory verse for next week.
3. The most important thing we want to do today is present the Gospel and present the kids with a chance to get saved.
4. Consider sharing the story of how you got saved with the kids to show them what it means to draw near to God and have Him draw near to you.