

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
SOCCER DEVOTIONS

4-9 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.

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 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**)

In the Word

Imagine you had three soccer balls to choose from. The first is a flat ball with a hole in it. The second one is a used ball that is old but works perfectly fine. The third one is a brand-new World Cup soccer ball signed by the world's best player. Which would you pick? The first one was bad, so probably not that one. The second one is good and you could still play with it, but the third was excellent, so I think we would all pick that one.

Just like with our example, in the Christian life there are things that are bad, things that are good, and things that are excellent. We know what's bad (sin) and that we are supposed to avoid sin, but being a Christian is more than just avoiding "bad stuff." God has also given us good things to enjoy, like toys, food, and sports, but there are things that are even better than that. In Philippians 4:8, Paul calls these things anything "excellent or praiseworthy."

So what things are "excellent" and "praiseworthy"? Colossians 3:1-2 gives us the answer: things that are above. These verses talk about two different kinds of things. The first, things on the earth, are the things that matter to us here and now in this life. That would include things like sports, food, toys, and games, which are good things the Lord has given us to enjoy but are not what's most important. The second kinds or things, things that are above, are things that are excellent and matter in heaven because they matter to God. This includes prayer, time in God's Word, and godly character, the sorts of things God cares about most. When Paul tells

In the Word (Continued)

us to set our minds on things above, he is telling us that we should focus our lives on the excellent things God has for us and not be distracted by the things that only matter here on earth, even the good things God has given us to enjoy.

One way to tell if something is excellent and praiseworthy is to ask yourself, “Will this matter to me and to God when I get to heaven?” It’s nice to play with our toys, eat yummy food, and compete in sports, but in heaven, we won’t care about how many goals we scored or soccer games we won. It won’t matter what our high score on a video game was or what kind of shoes we wore. What will matter is how much time we spent in prayer and God’s Word, how we treated others, and how many people we told about Jesus. These things are truly excellent and praiseworthy.

“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

- It’s good to try to win the game, but make sure that winning doesn’t become more important than obeying Jesus.
- 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

- How do you spend your time at home? If you spend it all watching TV or playing, you are missing out on something better: time in God’s Word and prayer with your family.
- When you are with Christians, don’t just play games. Talk about what the Lord is teaching you. With unbelieving friends, tell them about Jesus.
- Be sure to pay attention at church to see what God wants to teach you.

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, 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.