

GO FOR THE GOLD!!



MONDAY— OLYMPIC MINDED

Purpose of the rings - Union of the 5 inhabited continents

The colors in the rings are to represent all of the nations colors; to be inclusive

Different nations and ethnicities come together through sports and competition in a civilized way; they began in 776 BC in Olympia, Greece.

Each country picks “representatives” to compete; all agree to abide by rules and regulations and understand that there are consequences for failing to comply.

Recognizing different cultures have various ways of working together, achieving their goals, perspective and outside appearances.

How many different cultures are there? More than just the number of different countries; there are 195 countries in the world speaking 7151 languages. Groups of people will have some of their own dress, actions, interactions and attitudes. It is important to be able to appreciate many of these differences, even if we do not agree with them, unless it involves the belief that the one group hates another group.

1 Samuel 16:7 “For the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” For example, David, the youngest, was chosen to be King when no one else thought he would be the chosen one. He had been tending the sheep and was not even being considered until they had brought the older eight of his brothers and Samuel had said “This is not the one.”

John 4:7-31 Jesus went through the country of Samaria and asked the Woman at the Well for water; this was surprising because Jesus was a Jew and she was a Samaritan and it was the custom for them not to interact. Jesus shows here that He came for everyone and gives us the example to be kind to all.

Parable of the Good Samaritan Luke 10:29-37 Have students give summary of this story and discuss the different responses of those “passing by”; the priest, the Levite and the Samaritan.

*Let Students act out the Melodrama

Songs: "Love God, Love People" by Danny Gokey
"God loves people more than Anything" by Point of Grace

Questions:

How have you been surprised by someone being chosen? Maybe it was for a part in a play, or for team captain. Sometimes a leader has a different perspective and can see something in someone that others cannot see. God knows all and is in the present and the future; His perspective is quite different than ours.

What do you know about other cultures and how can you soften your heart towards others?

Would you be a Good Samaritan and help someone different than you?

How often do you judge people on their outward appearance?

Can you commit to trying harder to get to know people rather than make comments about how they look or what they wear?

Pray: Lord, help me to pause before I judge people on how they look. Give me your eyes to see people as You see people, knowing that You are their Creator as well as mine. Continue to teach me to be loving towards all people

Action step: Download the Operation World App—Christian-based app that has listing of all the countries of the world, facts and current prayer needs. Daily prayer requests related to countries listed in alphabetical order throughout the year.



TUESDAY—TEAM APPROACH

Whose team are you on? Most of us know what it's like to be on a team, whether it's sports, band, dance, leadership or something else. Just being with the same people trying for the same outcome brings a sense of bonding and belonging. As Christians we are on God's team and He gives us guidelines throughout the Bible. In the book of Proverbs we are given many words of wisdom, as well as other stories in the Old and New Testaments that we can learn from. The Ten Commandments located in the book of Deuteronomy, and the Two Greatest Commandments in Matthew given by Jesus, are given as specific guidelines for us to follow.

Who are your teammates? For each team we are on we realize that we have made a decision to be with these people for a purpose and for a time. You may or may not know all of your teammates; if it is a travel sports team, you may know some before you are on the team, but others you may not. As you practice and spend time with each other you begin to know their skill level, but also begin to know other facts about their lives.

How do you work together? The strength of the team comes from the strength of each member, but there is an additional strength when you work together with others. It is not just a 1 + 1 situation, it becomes a multiplier where the strength is greater than just the two individuals. Ecclesiastes 4:9 tells us "Two are better than one." In the spiritual realm we can also see the motivation grow as we are on this journey together. We encourage each other to do well, and this helps the team as a whole. An example is a track team where there are individual sports and awards, however points are also added to decide which team wins. Individuals want to do well for themselves but also to help the team as a whole.



What is the common goal – The Olympic motto is “Faster, Higher, Stronger.” Those who are on the Olympic team are in pursuit of a High calling to represent their country, but also to represent how different cultures can appreciate one another. As Christians, our common goal is to let others know of our experiences with Christ so that others can become a part of God’s family. The prize is Heaven but the goal is to bring others with us.

Bonding through adversity – Teams often experience adversity, especially sports teams, because at some point they will lose a game. Other times teams can experience conflict, from a lack of communication, feeling of failure or in relationships. Even a family is a “team” of sorts because they are a group of people with a common purpose. Learning how to handle conflict, respond in a mature manner, learning to forgive, and learning how to express your own emotions and feelings are all things to learn from adversity.

Questions:

What are some examples of trials or problems you have experienced or seen others experience during a team practice or game?

What negative outcomes can occur when someone is singled out for a mistake?

Celebrating victory – You may think this is only a positive experience, and most of the time it is because your team has achieved the desired result. You could however be on a different level of celebrating than others, depending on how you view the victory. For example, if you wanted the score to be higher, if you wanted to achieve the “Gold Medal” and you received the “Bronze Medal”. If you wanted to clock your fastest time and it was under your desired time, even though you are Victorious in others’ eyes, you may still feel a sense of “not good enough.” Even in the Christian life, our journey will have some victories, such as leading someone to Christ, being able to resist temptation in a certain area, making it regularly to church, having your Quiet Time with Jesus daily, or reading the Bible through during a year. But maybe you had less days than you wanted reading the Bible or having a Quiet Time, or you didn’t feel like it was worth it. On the outside you appear to be victorious, but your perception is clouded by your expectations. Put your focus on your positive accomplishments and take one day at a time.

Working towards same goal = body of Christ. As Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 12, “We are all part of one body in Christ. Every part matters, and no part is indispensable. As believers, we are instructed to “comfort one another” (2 Cor. 13:11), “build one another up” (1 Thess. 5:11), and “serve one another” (Gal. 5:13).

Recognize strengths = different gifts and talents Romans 12:6 Discuss different gifts, abilities, etc. that students have. The fact that a team includes offensive and defensive players, that an orchestra has many instruments and people play different parts.

Assist one another Eph 4:12 “Prepare God’s people to serve and to build up the body of Christ.” Example -Have students who have been on a missions trip or served locally to share their experience and how this helped the community and to build God’s kingdom.

Encourage one another I Thess 4:18, I Thess 5:11, Philippians 4:1, Phil 1:3-5; Ephesians 6:21-24 Paul is sending Tychicus to inform and to encourage others in Ephesus. II Thess 1:3 “your faith is flourishing and the love each one of you has for one another is increasing.”

Questions:

What is a good motto for the Christian to live by?

How can you be an encouragement to others to walk with Christ? One simple way is simply to be at church, attend youth group, go to events. Another is to reach out to others – those in the youth group, your friends, team members and new students.

Realize we ALL need to be encouraged, even your leaders, parents and teachers.

Adults are not your enemies, they do want the best for you, however they do have rules and guidelines; just like other Coaches in your life.



Pray: Lord, thank you for being the greatest Coach for my life. Help me to come to You for help in all areas of my life and to listen as You guide me. Help me to be okay with not being perfect, and with others not being perfect, as we continue our life journey.

WEDNESDAY—THE PRIZE/THE GOAL

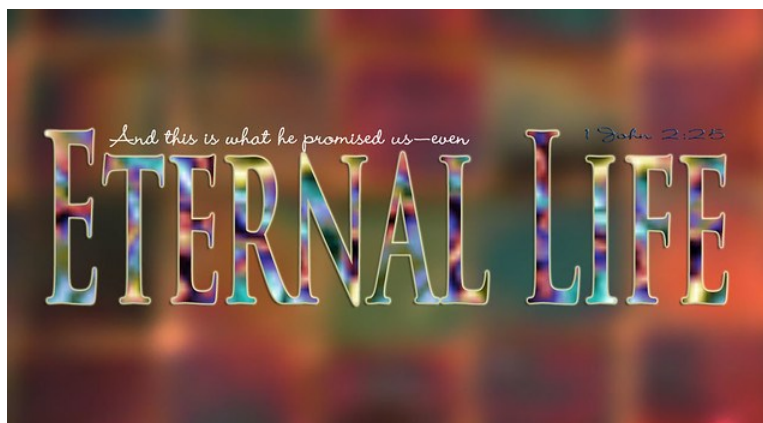
Heaven and the presence of God – Revelations 21:3 “Look God’s dwelling place is with humanity and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.” Revelations 21:22 “I did not see a sanctuary in it, because the Lord God, the Almighty and the Lamb are its sanctuary. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because God’s glory illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb.”

Eternal Life – Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Children of God – “To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12, Galatians 4:4-7 “...God sent His son... so that we might receive adoption as sons... and if a son, then an heir through God.”

Healing – Revelations 21:4 “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will no longer exist; grief, crying, and pain will exist no longer, because the previous things have passed away. Then the One seated on the throne said, “Look! I am making everything new.”

No more sin -Jesus said “it is good for you that I go away, for unless I go, the Advocate will not come to you.” John 16:7– Jesus was telling the disciples that He would be leaving, but would send the Holy Spirit to help them. John 14:26 “The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you.” 1 John 1:7-9 “Then the blood of Jesus, God’s Son, cleanses us from every sin.” Mark 2:10 “The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.”



Accepting Jesus as our Savior give us the prize of eternal life with God in Heaven, but this isn't all that we receive. We are "joint heirs with Christ". Romans 8 and Galatians 3, tells us of uncounted blessings and a lifeline to talk to God anytime through prayer. "We have access to the limitless resources of God Himself, the assurance of eternal life, and a relationship with God that brings peace and joy. He desires to give us "abundant life". I John 10:10 "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." We find more about this abundant life in Galatians 5; that true abundant life consists of an abundance of love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control (the Fruit of the Spirit). Romans 15:13 says "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."

Prize of Heaven: - "I go to prepare a place for you." Jesus said in John 14:2 And in John 3:3 Jesus said "truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Those who have not placed their trust in Jesus will be sent to Hell. "And these will go away into eternal punishment." Matthew 25:46 In II Thess 1:8-9 there is a description of Hell, "in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away for the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might." The choice is clear, the consequences are provided; our responsibility is to invite Jesus into our lives so that we also can enjoy the provisions and the prize.

Psalm 28:7 "The Lord is my strength and shield, in Him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to Him."

Questions:

Do you have assurance that you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior?

Have you considered there are only two choices?

Are you connecting with God daily through prayer?

Do you want to have this eternal, abundant life?



Song: "This I Believe" The Creed by Hillsong Worship

Prayer:

Thank You Lord that You have prepared a way, through Jesus, to have abundant life and eternal life with You. Help me be certain that You have forgiven me of my sins, You have washed me clean, and I am now a child of God. I have You as my Heavenly Father. I repent of my sins and choose to follow You and continue to grow to become more like You.

THURSDAY—TRAINING

Athletes are dedicated and committed. The work-out schedule is given by your coach and often you must reschedule other, maybe even alter your meals or homework or family time. Athletes spend many hours preparing.

The typical Olympian athlete trains 6-8 hours daily, 5 to 6 days a week for 4-8 years to try to be on the team. They must go through rigorous training and be involved in national competitions, as the field is narrowed down from tens of thousands, to about 500 on the USA team. Countries must follow the rules for the qualifying period and the number of athletes allowed to compete for the 32 different sports.

The Olympic oath, taken at the Opening Ceremony, says that he/she commits to respect the rules and take part in the competitions in a spirit of fair play. This is similar to the “Honor Code” that many schools have for their students. Each athlete will strive to be truthful and participate in a fair manner.

There are many passages in the Bible, but the most common one is John 3:16; some would say this is the code to know for a Christian. The Bible gives many other guidelines for us to follow, including the two greatest commandments Jesus gave us in Matthew 22: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind... And to love your neighbor as yourself.”

As we learned Monday, God created all people, and even though there are different cultures and languages, our goal is to love all as He does. This means we will be kind to all and will strive to not judge or look down upon others. Thankfully we have the Holy Spirit who helps us to follow Jesus’ commands.

Questions:

How many hours a week do you spend practicing music, dance or sports?

What have you had to give up in order to practice and prepare?

Coaches guide and require drills, hone skills, encourage, reprimand and discipline. What are some negative consequences you have endured?

What are some motivating statements that a Coach has made to encourage you to have a good outcome?

When we accept that we are actually on “The God Team”, we can recognize that we need practice times, we need passion, we need to focus, we need to train and to study. II Timothy 2:15 “Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that will not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” We are to read, discover, ask questions, be prepared. I Peter 3:15 “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

We do not have to have all of the answers but need to continually and regularly be learning and growing so that we can have a steady faith and be able to share with others. The Bible was given to us as our “playbook.” We find out who God is, how He loves us and how to have a dedicated life.

Questions:

Have you ever said “It’s summer time” or “It’s not school” so I don’t have to study or learn?

How can we change our perspective so that studying the Bible and learning more about how to be like Christ is a positive desire?

Prayer:

Thank you Lord for providing Coaches in my Christian life, like my Pastor and my Youth Pastor as well as other youth leaders and teachers in my church. Help me to be willing to listen and to apply what they are teaching to my life. Help me to increase my desire to read my Bible and learn more about God and His truth.`1

FRIDAY—REVIEW

How can I have a Global perspective?

How can I care for those different than me? Physically, mentally, culturally, spiritually

Who are my teammates? Closest ones, acquaintances, friends, .

How can I encourage my teammates?

Pray for compassion

What prize am I trying to achieve? Worldly? Eternally?

Who do I want to be with me? How can I recruit teammates?

Am I sure about where I am going? How can I be sure?

Pray for boldness

Where am I in the training process? Just starting out, seasoned veteran, experienced

What areas do I need to work on? Fruit of the Spirit, 10 Commandments

Playbook – have I studied the plays? Memorized the steps? Spent time and effort?

Pray for stamina and endurance

What specific actions can I take starting this week to be a committed team player?

What do I need to change about my weekly activities to remember I am on God's team?

Who can I encourage to be a team player?

Pray: Lord thank you for this week of Camp. I have learned and grown in my relationship with You and others. I will continue to study Your word and Your ways and encourage those around me. Help me increase my compassion and boldness. You are my Hope and strength.