



ATHLETE'S HANDBOOK

PROVEN

JOHN 15:8

Athlete's Handbook: Proven Edition

FCA Group Meetings and Training Time

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PROVEN

JOHN 15:8



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THE JOURNEY

Once Upon a Time, I believed love and acceptance were based on my performance.

And Every Day I felt exhausted and empty trying to prove myself.

Until One Day I found unconditional love through God's gift of salvation from the perfect life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

And Now I am already proven and remain connected to Jesus, producing fruit to point others to Him.

FROM PROVING MY WORTH TO PROVEN IN HIM

CONNECT MEETING 1

We're proven when we understand how God is connected to us and we compete with Him, not just for Him.

John 15:4

CULTIVATE MEETING 2

We're proven by prioritizing spiritual training and trusting that Jesus is a greater source of joy than sports.

John 15:8

CHOOSE MEETING 3

We're proven by who we love and how we love them.

John 15:12

COMMIT MEETING 4

We're proven through being resilient in the face of hardship and by learning about God's Spirit and listening to Him.

John 15:19

PROVEN

JOHN 15:8
"MY FATHER IS GLORIFIED BY THIS: THAT YOU PRODUCE MUCH FRUIT AND PROVE TO BE MY DISCIPLES."



HOW TO USE THE MEETINGS

At Camp: These four concepts are designed to fit together for a complete message at camp. It's not recommended to completely skip any of the topics. You can choose to break up the concepts to fit the number of meeting times for your camp or event. The DBS sets can be used as additional meetings or individual study times.

In Huddles: These four topics are intended to lead you on the journey from proving your worth to being proven in Him. Each meeting can be studied with your Huddle over a semester or a sports season. The additional key actions and DBS sets allow more intentional study at a slower pace.

Discovery Bible Study (DBS): A Discovery Bible Study template is added to the end of each meeting. This inductive Bible study method is focused on diving deeper into God's Word. You can use these with athletes and coaches within camps, Huddles or any ministry program.

Leader Guide: For best practices, a breakdown of each core concept and how to connect with your Huddle, scan the QR code in the banner on this page.

THE FOUR

THE GOSPEL EXPLAINED IN FOUR SIMPLE TRUTHS



The **FOUR** is a simple, repeatable way for anyone to share the Gospel.



GOD LOVES YOU

God made you and loves you! His love is boundless and unconditional. God is real, and He wants you to personally experience His love and discover His purpose for your life through a relationship with Him.

Genesis 1:27; John 3:16



JESUS RESCUES YOU

Jesus died, but He rose to life again. Jesus offers you peace with God and a personal relationship with Him. Through faith in Jesus, you can experience God's love daily, discover your purpose and have eternal life after death.

*Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8;
1 Peter 3:18*



SIN SEPARATES YOU

Sin damages your relationships with other people and with God. It keeps you from experiencing the fulfilling life God intends for you. The result: you are eternally separated from God and the life He planned for you.

Isaiah 59:2; Romans 3:23; 6:23



WILL YOU TRUST JESUS?

You choose to trust Jesus when you believe and confess that Jesus is Lord and surrender your life to Him. Are you ready to place your trust in Jesus?

*John 1:12; Romans 10:9-10;
Ephesians 2:8-9; Revelation 3:20*



The **FAITH RESPONSE TOOL** is for coaches and athletes who have recently made a decision to **START** a relationship with Jesus or they desire to **GROW** in their relationship with Jesus.

To use the tool, simply **SCAN THE QR CODE**.



DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY **TRAINING**

Use the guide below to study the Bible using the Discovery Bible Study method. If you are in a group, distribute the Discovery Bible Study template to those in your group.

1. WHAT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?

2. WHAT ARE YOU STRUGGLING WITH?

Questions 1 and 2 are designed to foster connection. After discussion, spend time in prayer for one another and for what you are about to study.

3. HOW DID YOU OBEY LAST WEEK?

4. WHO DID YOU SHARE WITH?

Discuss questions 3 and 4 for the purpose of checking in on how others obeyed and who they shared with since the last meeting. (*Note: these questions won't be used until your second meeting.*)

- **READ** – Have someone read the passage aloud while everyone else follows along with the Scripture using their eyes.
- **REREAD** – One person rereads the passage a second time, but this time everyone else closes their eyes and listens.
- **RETELL** – Together, without looking at the Bible, retell the passage, in as much detail as possible from memory.

5. WHAT DOES THIS SAY ABOUT GOD (FATHER, SON, HOLY SPIRIT)?

6. WHAT DOES THIS SAY ABOUT PEOPLE?

Look back at the Scripture and use questions 5 and 6 to discuss. Be sure to reference the specific verse in your answer. (An example using John 1: *“Verse 1 says that the Word was God and was with God.”*) This is not about your personal interpretation or application, but specifically about what the Scripture is saying.

7. BY GOD'S GRACE HOW WILL YOU OBEY GOD'S WORD THIS WEEK?

- **PRAY** and ask God what truth He wants you to focus on this week.
- **WRITE** a one-sentence, “I will . . .” statement on the Discovery Bible Study sheet capturing this conviction. Your response will be discussed at the next meeting in question 3.

8. WHO WILL YOU SHARE THIS SCRIPTURE PASSAGE WITH THIS WEEK?

- **PRAY** and ask God who needs to hear this.
- **WRITE** down one name and be intentional about sharing with that person. Your response will be discussed at the next meeting in question 4.

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY **TEMPLATE**



Use this QR code to download and print this template.

1. What are you thankful for?

2. What are you struggling with?

3. How did you obey last week?

4. Whom did you share with?

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE:

5. What does this say about God?
(Father, Son, Holy Spirit)

6. What does this say
about people?

7. By God's grace how will you
obey God's Word this week?

8. Whom will you share this
Scripture passage with this week?

CONNECT

PART 1

PROVEN ATHLETE'S MEETINGS

“REMAIN IN ME, AND I IN YOU. JUST AS A BRANCH IS UNABLE TO PRODUCE FRUIT BY ITSELF UNLESS IT REMAINS ON THE VINE, NEITHER CAN YOU UNLESS YOU REMAIN IN ME.” —JOHN 15:4

WARM-UP

Imagine this scenario. The season just ended and you are cleaning out your locker. Before everyone leaves, the coach comes in and lets you know that he will still hold optional practices in the offseason for those who want to keep working on their craft. When the next season starts, who do you think will be best positioned for success? The ones who continued practicing with the coach and followed his training program or the ones who did their own thing?

In John 15:1-7, Jesus has a similar locker-room-type discussion with His disciples. He knows the cross is near, marking the end of that season of life with His followers. But He encourages them to stay connected with Him. In fact, He repeatedly tells them to remain. Jesus implores His disciples to stay, to remain in Him and in His words because He knows it will best position them for spiritual success. The message echoes to us today. Will we stay connected to Him and His words, or will we navigate sport—and life—on our own?



WHO ARE YOU MOST CONNECTED WITH IN YOUR SPORT?

WHAT DO YOU DO TO STAY CONNECTED?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO BE CONNECTED TO GOD?

WORKOUT

RELATIONSHIP > RESULTS

Did you know that there are 18 recorded miracles performed by Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Mark? He calmed a storm, fed thousands of people with limited food, healed sickness and paralysis, walked on water, and even raised someone from the dead. Aside from performing

miracles, He also lived a sinless life, sacrificed Himself on the cross as a payment for our sin and rose from the dead. That's an impressive career! The Father must have been really proud of His Son, right? That's how things work within the economy of sport. Affirmation, value, worth and connection are offered *after* we perform and achieve success in competition.

But God's measurement for connection rests on an entirely different scale. We see a glimpse of this in the beginning of Mark, before Jesus has performed any miracles or even started His ministry on earth. In Mark 1:9-11, Jesus is baptized, and when He comes out of the water, the Father's audible voice from heaven declares, ***"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased"*** (Mark 1:11).

Wait. How can He be pleased with Jesus before Jesus has done anything spectacular? Wouldn't these words be better placed at the end of Mark when Jesus sat down at the right hand of God?

God proved that His connection to and pleasure with Jesus was not based on results or stats. It was based on a relationship with His Son. What does that mean for the rest of us?

- Q: How are your results (stats, performance, playing time) connected to how others feel about you? How are they connected to the way you feel about yourself?
- Q: How does it change your perspective knowing God does not look at the results but the relationship?

STARTING THE RELATIONSHIP

You don't need to perform for God. You don't have to do or prove anything to earn His favor or His love. You may swim fast in the water, but He doesn't require you to be the best—or even to walk on it in order to be connected to Him. He gives His favor and love freely to those He calls sons and daughters. This should lead to an obvious question: How do we become a son or a daughter?

The Bible is pretty clear that we are not born into God's family. In fact, quite the opposite. It says in Ephesians 2:3 that we were born as ***"children***

under wrath.” At some point in our lives, to be connected relationally to God, we need to be adopted into His family. You can check out page 3 to fully understand what God has done to make it possible for this to happen—and our required response. But here is the short version. Our sin not only disconnects us from God in the present; it also makes us deserving of disconnection (death) from Him for eternity. Knowing that we cannot prove our way out of this, God sent His Son, Jesus, to prove it for us. Jesus lived perfectly and died on our behalf. This perfect life and substitutionary death proved to be enough to cover the sins of the entire world. The only requirement on our end is to place our faith in Jesus and declare Him as Savior and Lord. To connect to Him, we must confess our sins and commit our allegiance to Him. That’s it!

All of us long to hear that someone is well-pleased with us. Those words are available to you today. Stop striving and straining to earn God’s favor through your performance and place your faith—and your life—in Jesus.

Q: Why do you think it’s hard for athletes to receive something without earning it?

Q: Why do you think God wants to be connected with you?

WRAP-UP

- We’re proven when we understand how God is connected to us.
- God desires intimacy with us.
- We are able to connect, remain and flourish with Christ as God’s son or daughter.
- God declares His good pleasure with us based on relationship, not results.

KEY ACTION

If you want to know more about being connected to God through Christ, go to thefour.fca.org or turn to page 3 and go through The FOUR. If you haven’t connected your heart to Jesus Christ, talk to your Huddle leader about making that life-changing decision today.



CONNECT

PART 2

WARM-UP

“REMAIN IN ME, AND I IN YOU. JUST AS A BRANCH IS UNABLE TO PRODUCE FRUIT BY ITSELF UNLESS IT REMAINS ON THE VINE, NEITHER CAN YOU UNLESS YOU REMAIN IN ME.” —JOHN 15:4

It's normal for Christian athletes to use language like "Playing for God" and "Playing for His glory." There is nothing wrong with wanting to do things in sports or in life for God. The Bible affirms this type of living in 1 Corinthians 10:31 when the Apostle Paul says, *"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."* But in all of our efforts to do things for God, we might be missing out on another way to integrate our faith into our athletic experience.

What if God doesn't simply want us to play for Him, but with Him as well?



WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL WAYS YOU CAN CONNECT WITH GOD?

DO YOU THINK GOD WANTS YOU TO BE CONNECTED WITH HIM WHILE YOU ARE COMPETING?

WORKOUT

FOLLOWING MARY'S LEAD

We see an example of God wanting us to play with Him as well as for Him in Luke. In Luke 10:38-42 Jesus visits the house of Martha. As Jesus is teaching, Mary (Martha's sister), sits at His feet, listening to His words. Martha is upset. She is busying herself with all of the necessary preparations. And this is not necessarily bad! She is doing things for Jesus. But in this moment, Jesus wants her to remain with Him instead of racing to get things done. Jesus says *"Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has made the right choice, and it will not be taken away from her"* (Luke 10:41-42).

God wants us to compete and practice with Him, not just for Him. This means finding ways to acknowledge His presence and continually shift our attention back to Him in practice, competition and throughout our daily lives. This is part of how we remain or abide with Him in the context of sports, by turning our attention to Him. It's worth noting that God wants us to play with Him, not so He can give us supernatural abilities in sport (though that would be nice!), but because He is a relational God who relates to us as a father. As a good Father, He wants to be included in the process!

- Q:** Why do you think God wants you to play with Him and not just for Him?
- Q:** What are some ways you can remember God is with you, even during competition?

REMEMBERING GOD IS WITH US

This is hard! How are we supposed to remember to play with God, instead of just for Him when competition demands so much of our attention and focus?

Acknowledging and remembering God's presence while we play sports is a challenging endeavor. But Jesus doesn't say in John 15 to remain in Him only when we're sitting down in a quiet spot and reading our Bible. He wants us to remain in Him at all times. What does this look like to practice the presence of God in sport? At the very least, it means acknowledging that He is with us by giving Him our attention.

You can do this practically by finding something you can quickly concentrate on that reminds you to think about God. It can be anything—a wristband, watch or even writing on your shoes. It could even be a scoreboard or a banner hung somewhere in the stadium. Ideally, it will be something you consistently see in practice and during competitions. When you see it, make it a visual reminder to redirect your thoughts to God.

Depending on your sport, the best time to do this is when there is a pause in the action, like between quarters, periods, during halftime, in the middle of a timeout or after a change of possession. This will probably be uncomfortable at first. But, like anything, the more practice

and attention you give to it, the more comfortable you will become remaining in Him while you play.

Q: How could remembering that God is with you change how you approach your sport?

Q: Why is it important to remain in Him at all times?

WRAP-UP

We're proven by playing with Him, not just for Him.

- We're wired to perform in order to please others, but Mary's example shows us that it's enough to simply be in Jesus' presence.
- Jesus wants us to remain in Him at all times.
- We need tangible reminders to remember Jesus' presence while we play.

KEY ACTION

Identify a few tangible reminders to help you remember Jesus' presence while practicing and competing.

NOTES

PROVEN

CULTIVATE

PART 1

PROVEN ATHLETE'S MEETINGS

“MY FATHER IS GLORIFIED BY THIS:
THAT YOU PRODUCE MUCH FRUIT AND
PROVE TO BE MY DISCIPLES.” —JOHN 15:8

WARM-UP

Has a coach or a teammate ever tried helping you learn a new skill? They can tell you all of the necessary details of what to do, but at some point, it's always easier when they say, “Just watch me.” In John 15:8-11, Jesus is teaching His disciples about a new way to live, and He gives them two directives: produce fruit and prove to be His disciples.

Produce and prove. What Jesus is communicating is that there should be a noticeable change in how we live our lives—and this change comes from a heart motivation that wants to please God more than impress others. Jesus wants His disciples to look, think, act and speak differently than the rest of culture. By doing that, they will prove to be His disciples.

But Jesus also gives them a few tips to add to their discipleship playbook that simplifies all of this. He encourages them to remain in His love by remembering to keep His commands. It's pretty simple, actually. Jesus is saying, “Hey, if you want to learn how to do this, just watch Me!” To remain in Jesus, produce the fruit He wants and prove to be His disciples, we watch Him—and follow Him.

And here is the best part: When we do this, Jesus says that our joy will be complete (John 15:11).



**HAS YOUR COACH EVER TRIED TO TEACH YOU
A NEW SKILL IN SPORT? DID IT COME NATURALLY
OR TAKE SOME TIME AND PRACTICE?**

**WHY DO YOU THINK THAT WATCHING JESUS
AND DOING WHAT HE DID IS THE BEST PLAY?**

WORKOUT

SPIRITUAL TRAINING > PHYSICAL TRAINING

If someone asked you to do 100 push-ups right now without a break, could you do it? Chances are, probably not. If you were given a month to get ready for this challenge, what would you do? You would likely put together a training plan to help build strength.

Start small. Stay consistent. Slowly add more reps. Following Jesus is similar to sport in the sense that we don't just become like Him in an instant. It takes a training plan.

There's a passage of Scripture in the New Testament that speaks to both physical and spiritual training—and the priority they should hold in our lives.

1 Timothy 4:7–8 says, ***“But have nothing to do with pointless and silly myths. Rather, train yourself in godliness. For the training of the body has limited benefit, but godliness is beneficial in every way, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.”***

Train yourself for godliness.

Training the body has limited benefit.

Godliness is beneficial in every way.

Physical training is important. It has value. But it shouldn't be our highest priority. The good news is that spiritual training plans are similar to physical ones. Start small. Stay consistent. Slowly add more reps. You don't have to memorize the entire Bible today. Just spend some time reading it. You don't have to pray for an hour straight. Just try talking to God for 30 seconds. As you continue to do this daily, your spiritual muscles will strengthen and grow.

- Q: What physical training do you do daily?
- Q: Do you train spiritually every day? What are some things you would add to a spiritual training plan?

GOD GROWS OUR SPIRITUAL MUSCLES

God doesn't just tell us to prioritize our spiritual training. He does something extra to sweeten the deal. He promises that our growth is ultimately dependent on Him leading the process. It's a big reason why Jesus says over and over again in John 15 to remain in Him. Remaining in Him allows the fruit in our lives to be produced.

The apostle Paul shows how this works in 1 Corinthians 3:7. He says, ***“So, then, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.”***

God gives the growth!

God tells us to produce fruit and prove to be His disciples. Again, this means following Him by aligning our lives according to His words. But ultimately, any growth we experience is not of our own doing—it's from Him. The beauty in all of this is that God promises that spiritual growth will happen because He is in charge of it all.

If you play college sports (or hope to someday), you probably chose the school because you trusted that the coach would help you reach your full potential. How much more so with God! Why wouldn't we want to prioritize spiritual training when we are promised God will lead the process of growth on our behalf?

Q: How could prioritizing spiritual training help you in your sport?

Q: How have you seen God produce fruit in your life?

WRAP-UP

We're proven by prioritizing spiritual training.

- Remaining in Jesus requires a plan.
- Start small. Stay consistent. Slowly add more reps.
- Spiritual growth will happen because it's dependent on God.

KEY ACTION

Develop a spiritual training plan. Write it down and tell a friend who can help hold you accountable.

CULTIVATE

PART 2

“I HAVE TOLD YOU THESE THINGS SO THAT MY JOY MAY BE IN YOU AND YOUR JOY MAY BE COMPLETE.” —JOHN 15:11

WARM-UP

As we prioritize living a godly life (producing fruit) by aligning our words, thoughts and actions with Jesus (remaining in Christ), God promises something in return: joy. And not just a small sample of it. We learn in John 15:11 that Jesus promises to complete our joy!

Joy is a good feeling in the soul that's not dependent on circumstances but grounded in the goodness of God. Because it's not circumstantial, joy is attainable even when things in sport go sideways.



DESCRIBE THE LAST TIME YOU FELT JOY DURING COMPETITION OR PRACTICE.
DEFINE JOY.

WORKOUT

THE GOD OF JOY

Jesus promises to complete our joy. This would not have been a new idea to early Christians familiar with God's word. In Psalm 16:11, David said: *“You reveal the path of life to me; in Your presence is abundant joy; at your right hand are eternal pleasures.”*

The path of life, laid out by God, is paved with joy. How? Because God blesses us with His presence along the way. In John 15, Jesus is helping the disciples make a similar connection. When we stay connected to Him and follow His lead, He blesses us with fullness of joy through His presence.

God is not after your begrudging submission. He doesn't want you to simply follow Him because you have to or because you hope He will reward you with some athletic blessing. He is after your joy because He

created you and He knows how to give it to you abundantly and completely.

Q: How often do you experience joy in your life?

In competition?

Q: Reflecting on the definition of joy, how do you think remaining in Jesus can complete your joy?

CHRIST > CHAMPIONSHIPS

It's easy to think that the next win, personal best or championship will bring us joy and happiness. And honestly, in the short run, it probably will. But there will always be a ceiling on the amount of happiness earthly things can bring us. More often than not, we will be disappointed at how low that ceiling is. Why is this the case?

Solomon wrote the book of Ecclesiastes, a book committed to showing that true joy cannot be found in the pleasures this earth offers. He says in Ecclesiastes 3:11 that God has put eternity in our hearts. The implication is simple: we cannot be satisfied by earthly things. The Bible does not say whether King Solomon could throw, catch or hit a ball. We do know that he was good-looking, rich and strong. On paper, he had it all. And yet he repeatedly writes throughout Ecclesiastes that everything is ***“absolute futility”*** (1:2). He tried finding lasting joy in everything this world had to offer and found that it was like chasing after a dangling carrot. Always close, never complete.

It's not bad to want to win. There should be an appropriate desire in the heart of every athlete to pursue it. Giving our best brings honor to God as the One who gave us these athletic gifts (Colossians 3:23). But there is a good reason athletic success won't satisfy us at a soul level. It was never supposed to. We were created for more. We were created for eternity! When we remain in Jesus, the eternal King, He promises to complete our joy.

The good news is that when we remain in Jesus while we compete, we align ourselves with the way God intended His good gifts, like sports, to work. And in the end, we also get the maximum amount of joy out of our sport—not because He rewards us with wins and championships,

but because He blesses us with His presence.

Q: How does it make you feel when you hear that Jesus wants to offer you complete joy?

Q: Is it hard for you to believe that you can have joy even if sports are not going the way you want? Explain.

WRAP-UP

We're proven by trusting that Jesus is a greater source of joy than sport.

- Jesus wants to give us abundant joy.
- Jesus knows that this joy comes from remaining in His presence.
- Success in sports is great, but it will never fully satisfy the longing in our hearts.

KEY ACTION

Create a list of moments in life and in competition where your joy was complete. Spend time thanking God for those moments and the joy He gave you.

NOTES

PROVEN

CHOOSE

PART 1

PROVEN ATHLETE'S MEETINGS

“THIS IS MY COMMAND: LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.” —JOHN 15:12

WARM-UP

“We need to hustle out there.”

You're barely able to catch your breath during the timeout as coach starts the timeout talking about the need to pick up the energy. Coach offers a few more insights and encouragement, but breaks the huddle with the same theme: “I want to see some hustle out there!”

Any time a parent or coach starts and ends with the same command, you know it must be important!

This is exactly what Jesus is doing with His disciples in John 15:12–17. They're in the huddle together with Jesus and He brackets the pep talk with the same command: love one another.



**IS THERE A CONSISTENT PIECE OF ADVICE THAT YOUR COACH (OR PARENT) REITERATES TO YOU?
HOW COACHABLE ARE YOU ON A SCALE OF 1–10? EXPLAIN.**

WORKOUT

LOVE YOUR TEAMMATES

See if this sounds familiar: An individual gets recruited to be a part of a team of twelve. The team is filled with members from very different backgrounds. They have a common goal they all strive towards together. Over the course of a few years, they experience growth personally, spiritually and skillfully. The team has some incredible highs and lows together. For the most part, they get along, but they have some normal relational qualms—some arguments even center around who is the best on the team. And they all look to one person for direction and training.

Jesus' disciples were a team. In John 15:12–17, He huddles them up and gives them a command two separate times: love one another. This team, made up of individuals, was tasked by Jesus to prove their commitment to the team by loving one another. The same command echoes to us today.

But in a world with billions of people, who are we tasked with showing daily love to? A good place to start would be the people whom God has put in front of you for multiple hours each day: a group of people who shares the same goal, with whom you experience highs and lows, and maybe even argue with from time to time!

God wants you to love your teammates.

It's not by accident that you are together. Perhaps God placed you on the same team so that you can win whatever title you are chasing. But you can be certain of one thing: God has you where you are at, with the people you are with, for however long you are with them, so that they can experience God's love for them through you.

- Q:** Do you think it is easy or hard (or both) to love your teammates? Why?
- Q:** What might it look like to practically show love to a teammate?

LOVE THOSE WHO GO UNNOTICED

While Jesus could not be clearer in John 15 that we should love one another, much of His ministry was spent loving people on the margins as well. If we want to love like Jesus, we will also choose to love those who go unnoticed.

Earlier in the Gospel of John, Jesus is tired from traveling and sits down at a well. A Samaritan woman comes to the well to draw water, and Jesus engages her in conversation (John 4:7). This was not normal. The woman knew it and asked why Jesus would talk with her. And in case the original audience didn't know this was taboo, John 4:9 even says, ***“Jews do not associate with Samaritans.”***

While it may have been a shock for others, this was vintage Jesus. He always engaged with people that the rest of society deemed insignificant, marginalized and unworthy. Jesus made time for the unpopular and unnoticed. Even though He commanded His disciples (and us) to love one another, watching the very life of Jesus helps us understand that “one another” is not limited to those we get along with or the popular crowd. One another means everyone—especially those whom we often ignore.

Who are the unnoticed in sport? Here is a short list to get you thinking about the people that Jesus would notice, move towards and love within the context of sports: the injured athlete, the one at the end of the bench or the one who just got cut. The maintenance worker who cuts the grass, cleans the pool, dusts the floor or rakes the dirt. The referee who spent the entire game getting yelled at by coaches and parents. The athlete on the opposing team who had a tough game.

Jesus loved those whom others ignored. We’re proven when we choose to do the same.

Q: Who comes to mind when you think of someone who is unnoticed in your life?

Q: How can you show love to someone who is unnoticed?

WRAP-UP

We’re proven by who we love.

- Jesus says multiple times to love one another.
- It makes most sense to love those who we see every day (teammates).
- We must also love those who go unnoticed.

KEY ACTION

Go out of your way to love a teammate and someone who goes unnoticed this week.

CHOOSE

PART 2

“THIS IS MY COMMAND: LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.” —JOHN 15:12

WARM-UP

Love is often a word thrown around to describe things we enjoy. “I love this coffee.” “I love that app.” “I love that song, that show, that shoe, that . . . sport.”

But Jesus introduced a love that transcends our cheapened understanding of it. In the original language the word Jesus used has a deeper meaning than the word we throw around.



WHY DO YOU LOVE YOUR SPORT?

WHAT DO YOU SACRIFICE FOR YOUR SPORT? WHAT DOES YOUR FAMILY SACRIFICE SO YOU CAN COMPETE?

WORKOUT

AGAPE LOVE IS SACRIFICIAL

The word for love Jesus used most often in the New Testament (and the one we see in John 15) is *agape*. Agape is sacrificial love. It does what’s best for others in spite of what it costs us. And make no mistake, agape love is costly. It was agape love that motivated Jesus to die on the cross for our sins.

When Jesus says in John 15:12 to *“love one another as I have loved you,”* He is telling His disciples—and us—that His life is the playbook for how we love those around us.

Because Jesus sacrificed for others, we sacrifice for others.

Because Jesus served others, we serve others.

Because Jesus walked this earth with a “There you are” instead of a “Here I am” attitude, we adopt a similar posture.

This is not a feeling. It's a life characterized by self-sacrificial action. For the early Christians, treating others with agape was the litmus test that revealed one's true relationship with God. The test extends to us today. Our love for God is proven through sacrificially loving our teammates and those in sport who go unnoticed.

- Q: Tell about a time when you did something for a teammate that came at a great cost to you.
- Q: How should the view that love is sacrificial change the way you love others?

AGAPE LOVE IS UNCONDITIONAL

In Luke 15, Jesus tells a parable about a son who squandered the inheritance from his father on *“foolish living”* (Luke 15:13). When the son came to his senses, he traveled home hoping that he would become one of his father's servants. What happens next shows the unconditional love of the father: *“So he got up and went to his father. But while the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him”* (Luke 15:20).

The father's love for his son was grounded in relationship, not results. He didn't need to behave in order to belong to the family.

The agape love of Jesus, the kind He wants us to show to others, is not only sacrificial, it's also unconditional. This means that it is offered without any strings attached. Unconditional love does not keep score. It doesn't say, “I picked up the trash in the locker room last time so now it's your turn.” Unconditional agape love is offered without an expectation that we would receive anything in return. It places others' needs above our own and isn't concerned with being recognized or affirmed.

In the same way that we don't have to earn God's love, we can offer a similar love to others. Our teammates don't need to prove themselves worthy of our love before we offer it to them.

Who we choose to love and why we choose to love them offers evidence of Jesus in our lives. Our love is our proof that we are His disciples. Will

we love only when we get something back in return, or will we remain in Jesus and love unconditionally?

As we remain in Him and love others like He loves us, we're transformed from the inside out until others-centeredness becomes second nature.

- Q: Why do you think it is easier to love others when you know you are getting something in return?
- Q: Has a teammate or coach ever shown unconditional love to you? What did it feel like?

WRAP-UP

We're proven by how we love.

- Agape love is sacrificial.
- Agape love is unconditional.
- Our motivation for loving others is proof of who we serve.

KEY ACTION

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7. Think about the importance of the fruit of love. Consider the traits of love in verses 4-7. Which ones do you need to improve on?

NOTES

PROVEN

COMMIT

PART 1

PROVEN ATHLETE'S MEETINGS

“IF YOU WERE OF THE WORLD, THE WORLD WOULD LOVE YOU AS ITS OWN. HOWEVER, BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, BUT I HAVE CHOSEN YOU OUT OF IT, THE WORLD HATES YOU.” —JOHN 15:19

WARM-UP

Playing at an opponent’s stadium can be challenging. But at least you know what to expect. The environment will be a little more hostile, the calls might not go in your favor, the majority of the people watching are pulling for the other team. When you’re playing an away game, you know you have to focus a little harder and dig a little deeper.

In John 15:18–27, Jesus is telling His disciples (and us) that the world is against them. In sports terms, He is telling them that the life of faith is an away game. Jesus’ words have the aroma of someone who knows exactly how His disciples feel. He is essentially saying, “Hey, this is going to be hard. The rest of the world is not going to make it easy on you. But remember, they did the same to Me. I am here with you through it all.”



DESCRIBE AN EXPERIENCE YOU HAVE HAD PLAYING AT SOMEONE ELSE’S HOME FIELD. WHAT WAS IT LIKE? WERE YOU PREPARED FOR THE MOMENT?

WORKOUT

PRACTICING RESILIENCY

What does it look like, practically, to be resilient when trials come in a way that honors God? The playbook for remaining in God during times of adversity is found throughout all of Scripture. We see it clearly in 2 Chronicles 20.

There is an alliance of nations marching against Judah to make war and the enemy forces are about 30 miles outside Jerusalem when King Jehoshaphat hears about it. What would you do in that situation?

Here are some wise options: Get the archers to the top of the city walls, inform the generals to gather Judah's army, fortify the walls and make sure the vulnerable are somewhere safe. All of those are good options, right? But Jehoshaphat embodies a different way of responding to hardship. Scripture says, ***“Jehoshaphat was afraid, and he resolved to seek the LORD. Then he proclaimed a fast for all Judah”*** (2 Chronicles 20:3). In that single verse we see from Jehoshaphat that resiliency is not the absence of fear but the ability to lean into God and move forward despite it. In verse 12, Jehoshaphat declares to God in prayer in front of his people: ***“We do not know what to do, but we look to you.”***

It's worth reading all of 2 Chronicles 20 but here is the spoiler alert: God comes through and saves the people of Judah.

Instead of pushing forward in his own strength, King Jehoshaphat chose to keep his eyes fixed on God, showed vulnerability, and asked for help. King Jesus did the same thing.

- Q:** Think of the last time you were in a stressful situation during competition. How did you handle it?
- Q:** How can leaning into God help you in competition and in life?

FOLLOWING JESUS' LEAD

We prove we are Jesus' disciples when we follow Him. And one of the ways He leads us is by embodying what it looks like to face adversity in a way that honors the Father.

In Matthew 26, Jesus knows that His crucifixion is close, and He asks His disciples to keep watch while He prays. As He leaves the twelve to huddle up with the Father, He is grieved to the point of death (Matthew 26:38). While we don't have the full account of what Jesus shared, the few snippets of vulnerability from Him prove valuable to us. He prays, ***“My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will”*** (Matthew 26:39).

Even though His disciples didn't hear the prayer, it was one they would have been familiar with. Jesus prayed the same way He taught His disciples to pray: ***“Our Father . . . Your will be done”*** (Matthew 6:9-10).

We prove that we're His disciples when we respond to hardships like Jesus—with a heart posture that admits our state of weakness, our honest desires, and ultimately, our trust in God over all of it.

This world is not our home. We're strangers. We're playing an away game against an opponent who will stop at nothing to secure victory over us. And with that reality comes the certainty of trials and struggles. When they come (not if they come), commit yourself to running to and remaining in the Father, just like Jesus did.

Q: Why do you think God wants us to talk with Him when life gets difficult?

Q: When hardships come what is your typical response?

WRAP-UP

We're proven through being resilient in the face of hardship.

- Jesus promised that our love for Him would put us at odds with much of the world.
- When we go through trials, we grow in resiliency by following Jesus' lead and going straight to God in prayer.
- God gives us freedom to ask boldly and honestly, but with a desire for His will to be done.

KEY ACTION

Study John 17:6–26. In this Scripture, Jesus prays for His disciples and all believers. How can His prayer comfort us?

NOTES

COMMIT

PART 2

“WHEN THE COUNSELOR COMES, THE ONE I WILL TO SEND YOU FROM THE FATHER—THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH WHO PROCEEDS FROM THE FATHER—HE WILL TESTIFY ABOUT ME.” —JOHN 15:26

WARM-UP

When you become part of a team, you usually receive some nice perks: gear, shoes, per diem, and if you're lucky, even laundry. When you make a decision to place your faith in Christ, you get perks too. The biggest one is the Holy Spirit. The moment you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, He gives you the Holy Spirit to help you grow.



**IF YOU EVER GET AN NIL
(NAME, IMAGE LIKENESS) DEAL,
WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH THE MONEY?**

WORKOUT

CONNECTED

At the end of John 15, Jesus moves from talking about hardship to promising that the Holy Spirit is coming to help. He refers to the Spirit as the Counselor (John 15:26). A few verses later Jesus tells His disciples that it's actually better for Him to leave so the Counselor can come (John 16:7). As a disciple of Jesus, this means that no matter where you are, you have the presence of God dwelling in you!

To fully appreciate this gift, you need to get to know Him (yes, the Holy Spirit is a Him not an it) and the Bible tells us that:

- He helps us when we are weak (Romans 8:26).
- He prays to the Father on our behalf (Romans 8:26).
- He transforms us to look more like Jesus (Romans 8:29).
- He teaches and reminds us (John 14:26).
- He convicts us (John 16:8).
- He guides us (John 16:13).

The Spirit's presence in our lives means that whenever we practice or compete, God is with us. He is not a distant being in the top corner of the bleachers staring down at us. He is with us every step of the way!

If you are in Christ, you are never alone because His Spirit lives actively within you, offering you a constant presence no matter what you deserve or how you perform.

- Q: Before this workout, how would you have described the Holy Spirit to someone?
- Q: How does knowing you are never alone change your perspective?

PRODUCING FRUIT FROM THE SPIRIT

Remember, Jesus told His disciples that God is glorified when they produce much fruit. It's one of the primary ways we can prove that we are His disciples. As we acknowledge the Spirit's active presence in our lives and begin to follow His lead, the Bible says that He produces fruit in our lives!

The Apostle Paul talks about this in Galatians 5:22-23. He says that the Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

As we surrender to the Spirit's leading, we see this fruit, or proof, displayed in our lives. This doesn't mean that life is easy or that every aspect of our lives changes immediately. It also doesn't mean we'll live perfectly in these categories. In fact, these changes often happen without us necessarily feeling like we are changing. It's similar to physical training. We rarely see proof of the work after a day. But as weeks, months and years go by, there is fruit (proof) that our training is working.

What does this mean for you as an athlete? It means you have Someone with you at all times who has a vested interest in seeing you remain in Jesus and produce fruit in your life!

Being connected to the Spirit means you have unlimited access to your Creator—the same Creator who identifies as your Father.

Being connected to the Spirit means you don't have to just settle for playing for God. You can now play with Him.

Being connected to the Spirit means you have a purpose and power that transcends the world of sports.

Your identity as an athlete offers you some pretty amazing perks, but your identity as a follower of Christ means you are personally connected to the Father at all times through the Holy Spirit's presence in your life. As you commit to follow the Spirit's lead in your life, He offers you everything needed to grow, thrive and persevere in sport—and more importantly, in life.

Q: Of the nine character traits within the Fruit of the Spirit, which one could you use the most right now?

Q: Being connected to God through the Spirit has several perks. Which one brings you the most comfort?

WRAP-UP

We're proven by learning about God's Spirit and listening to Him.

- If you have surrendered your life to Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives in you.
- The Spirit's job, simply stated, is to help you look more like Jesus every day.
- Our job is to acknowledge His active presence in our life and follow His lead.

KEY ACTION

Assess the Fruit of the Spirit in your life. Which ones do you need to work on the most?

NOTES

PROVEN

TRAINING TIME

OVERVIEW

Every morning, set aside a special time called “quiet time” or spiritual “training time.” During this time, talk to God and let Him talk to you through the Bible and His Spirit. Many effective methods can be used for your daily time with God. The Discovery Bible Study Method used throughout this handbook can be used during Training Time as well.

We’ve prepared four devotions for you. If you commit to doing these, you will establish a powerful habit for your spiritual growth.

TOPICS

Topics covered in the Training Time devotions were created to support this year’s theme: Proven.

FORMAT

- **READY:** Focus—a verse, passage or thought to direct your heart and mind. (Turn to the Scripture reference in your Bible so you can read it within the overall context of the passage.)
- **SET:** Teaching—a story, training point or thought taken from a sports perspective.
- **GO:** Application—a prayer, question, thought or action to direct you on how to be like Christ.
- **WORKOUT:** Additional Bible reading to help you dig deeper.
- **OVERTIME:** Prayer to help you connect with God.

I WILL COMMIT TO ESTABLISHING THIS DAILY HABIT:

_____/_____/_____

(TODAY'S DATE)

TRAINING TIME 1

CONNECT WITH GOD

KATE BRITTON

READY

“YOU WILL SEEK ME AND FIND ME WHEN YOU SEARCH FOR ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART. I WILL BE FOUND BY YOU.” —JEREMIAH 29:13-14a

SET

In our daily lives, there can be so much to do and so many expectations to meet. Whether it's homework, appointments, practice, or even time spent with friends and family. With so much to commit to, when do we find the time to connect with God?

Sometimes we go through a whole day or longer before we finally remember to spend time with the Lord. Once we finally get there, it's easy to doubt and think things such as why would He want to connect with me after I've waited this long? Where do I start back up? Are You still there God? I know You haven't heard from me in a while.

You are not alone! Guess what? We have a loving Father who can't wait to embrace us wherever we are whenever the time! In God's Word, the prophet Jeremiah encourages us to seek after the Lord even in the midst of chaos. Jeremiah 29:13 shows us the heart of God as He invites us to spend time with Him. It's like someone inviting you over to their home because they want to spend time with you. Just like we prioritize relationships in our lives, it is important

to do the same in your relationship with the Lord! The Creator of the universe wants to spend time with you, and He wants you to learn all about Him too.

We can seek the Lord through reading the Bible, talking to God through prayer, spending time with other believers, listening to sermons or Christian podcasts or jamming out to worship music. Connecting with the Lord can and should become part of our daily routine.

GO

- Q:** Why is it sometimes a struggle to connect to God?
- Q:** What is one thing you can do to connect with God's Word daily?
- Q:** What is one thing you can do to deepen your prayer time with God?
- Q:** What is one way you can spend time with other believers?

WORKOUT

Deuteronomy 31:8;
Isaiah 41:10; James 4:8

OVERTIME

Dear God, thank You for being right there to meet with me whenever and wherever I am. Help me to grow in my relationship with You through time in Your Word, prayer, and relationships with other believers. Amen.

TRAINING TIME 2

CULTIVATING CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

JESSI GILES

READY

“MY FATHER IS GLORIFIED BY THIS: THAT YOU PRODUCE MUCH FRUIT AND PROVE TO BE MY DISCIPLES. AS THE FATHER HAS LOVED ME, I HAVE ALSO LOVED YOU. REMAIN IN MY LOVE. IF YOU KEEP MY COMMANDS YOU WILL REMAIN IN MY LOVE, JUST AS I HAVE KEPT MY FATHER’S COMMANDS AND REMAIN IN HIS LOVE. I HAVE TOLD YOU THESE THINGS SO THAT MY JOY MAY BE IN YOU AND YOUR JOY MAY BE COMPLETE.” —JOHN 15:8-11

SET

During preseason, my college basketball team had a 10,000-makes rule. To be able to shoot threes in a game, you had to make 10,000 threes outside of practice throughout the preseason. Of course, everyone wanted to be able to shoot threes. So, in the months leading up to our first game we all spent a ton of time in the gym. You could even say we lived in the gym.

When those first few games rolled around it was no surprise that our team always had a really high three-point percentage. We spent countless hours in the gym. It made sense. But as the season progressed our team’s shooting percentage often regressed. Why? Because once people hit their 10,000 makes, they stopped going to the gym to shoot

A relationship with Christ works the exact same way. Nobody accidentally gets really good at their sport. It requires spending countless hours in the gym, weight room, or on the field. As athletes, we know this. What we so often forget is that nobody accidentally gets a strong relationship

with Christ either. It requires the same amount of dedication and discipline that your sport does.

The word used time and time again in John 15 is remain. Remaining in Christ means to have a continuous connection with Christ. This requires actively putting in the work to sit and dwell in the presence of God. This might mean setting your alarm a little earlier to spend time in prayer before you start your day. Perhaps it looks like spending less time on social media and more time reading God’s Word. Either way, it requires work.

As our season progressed, it was evident which athletes continued to spend time in the gym outside of practice and which ones didn’t. The fruit of their hard work was always evident. Remaining in Christ produces similar fruit. Make sure you are remaining in the presence of God.

GO

- Q:** As an athlete, what areas of your life are you disciplined in?
- Q:** In your walk with Christ, what areas do you need to be more disciplined in?
- Q:** Are you actively or passively pursuing Christ?

WORKOUT

John 15:4-7; Psalm 42:1; Galatians 5:22-23

OVERTIME

Lord, help me to always pursue You and never grow tired of chasing after You. Help me to make my relationship with You a priority in my schedule every single day. Help me to remain in You always. In Jesus’ name, amen.

TRAINING TIME 3

WHAT WE CHOOSE MATTERS

SARAH FREYMUTH

READY

“YOU DID NOT CHOOSE ME, BUT I CHOSE YOU. I APPOINTED YOU TO GO AND PRODUCE FRUIT AND THAT YOUR FRUIT SHOULD REMAIN, SO THAT WHATEVER YOU ASK THE FATHER IN MY NAME, HE WILL GIVE YOU.” —JOHN 15:16

SET

Every day, we get the opportunity to make thousands of choices. What time will we get up? What will we eat and fuel our bodies with? Will we squeeze that extra workout in? Will we listen to our coach when he tells us we need to tighten up our fundamentals?

What we choose to prioritize is proven by what we desire and our actions toward pursuing it. What we do displays what we deem important. If we choose to hang out with people who may not be good influences on us, we may be tempted to slip into things we won't want to be a part of.

What we choose matters.

Jesus showed us what matters when He chose to love us and come to earth for us. He chose us before the beginning of the world to be His disciples and learn from Him, and He invites us to prove our relationship with Him by bearing much life-giving fruit in our lives as we look and act like Jesus.

He gave us a beautiful example of how to love others, even when it's hard, because He first loved us. And we get to choose how we interact with people,

whether we give a listening ear or a kind word at the right time. He's commanded us to love one another, because love proves our affections for Him.

It's the choices we make that show who we are. Will we want people to see us as Kingdom-minded, with intent to remain in close relationship with God and bear fruit from staying close to Jesus? What does your fruit look like? How will you choose to love like Jesus today?

Staying connected to the source of our life brings a beautiful bounty to our lives that benefits those around us as well as our own hearts. Choose to stay close to Jesus and choose to let His teachings stick in your heart as you act in love on His behalf.

GO

- Q:** Have you been doing things your own way? How has that gone for you?
- Q:** What would it look like to live connected to the overflowing love of Jesus?

WORKOUT

John 8:31-32; Galatians 5:22-23; Colossians 1:10

OVERTIME

God, thank You that You first loved us, and sent Jesus as an example to live out of Your love. I want to stay connected to You, so that my life looks more like Jesus and others can benefit from the fruit I produce. I choose to live for You. In Jesus' name, amen.

TRAINING TIME 4

NOTHING BEFORE CHRIST

ARBOR DIGGS

READY

“IF THEY PERSECUTED ME, THEY WILL ALSO PERSECUTE YOU. IF THEY KEPT MY WORD, THEY WILL ALSO KEEP YOURS.” —JOHN 15:20b

SET

As a kid I connected with a lot of different things. I connected with clubs and groups at school because my friends were involved, so I committed to joining. I connected with workouts and routines because they made being healthy fun, so I committed to attending. I even connected with a tutoring group and committed to studying with them! However, when I was tired, had a lot of homework or just had a long day, I would skip out on those commitments. When my father noticed my skipping, he pulled me to the side and said, “Once you commit, you stay committed, especially when it gets hard.”

When we first connect with God, we feel excitement, similar to how I felt when I connected as a kid. When we follow Christ, we feel His love and are encouraged by His Word, but we also begin to cultivate His character and choose to love others! Committing to Christ is great!

Committing to Christ becomes hard when we get left out of things, get made fun of, face temptation, feel rejected or like we do not belong. It would be easy to throw in the towel, walk away and commit to an easier way of life that is found in the world.

Jesus meets us, however, in these hard moments, just as my father met me when I was young. He speaks clearly, “*If they persecute me, they will also persecute you*” (John 15:20). Jesus is teaching His disciples and us today that commitment to Him is commitment to a cost. Committing to Christ may cost us friends, popularity, money, possessions and maybe even our lives. However, when we commit to Jesus and remain in Him we are assured of life in Heaven and the “*crown of life that God has promised to those who love him*” (James 1:12).

The cost is great, but committing to being beside Jesus from the beginning is even greater.

GO

- Q:** Have you committed to following Jesus?
- Q:** Has there been a cost to following Jesus?
- Q:** What helps you not give up on your commitment to Jesus?

WORKOUT

Psalm 23:1-4; John 14:1-6; 1 Peter 4:12-19

OVERTIME

God, I commit to You. I want to be all in for Your Kingdom. I pray You help me abide in You, becoming more like You. Help me not waiver in my love for You, for others or for the Gospel. Help me stay committed, especially when it gets hard, so I can be an example to others when they struggle to stay committed. In Jesus' name, amen.

E3 ***DISCIPLESHIP***

All good coaches need a clear game plan. Without it, they won't stand a chance against their opponent. The same is true for our spiritual lives. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus gave us a clear command: go and make disciples. The game plan is clear, but the path may be uncertain. What is the first step in making disciples?

E3 DISCIPLESHIP is a simple, repeatable discipleship training process for coaches and athletes. It provides a series of plays and strategies to help you execute God's game plan by exploring twelve principles and patterns directly from Scripture, showcasing Jesus' model for making disciples. E3 Discipleship Training explains how to practically Engage, Equip and Empower coaches and athletes to make disciples who make disciples.

ENGAGE

EQUIP

EMPOWER



Visit **E3.FCA.ORG**
to access the
course and start
your journey today!

52-WEEK DISCOVERY

BIBLE STUDIES

CORE CONCEPT 1

CONNECT

- 1 True Vine/Branches
JOHN 10:11-18
- 2 Parable of Lost Sheep
LUKE 15:1-7
- 3 Two Ways
PSALM 1:1-6
- 4 Who is God
PSALM 103:6-14
- 5 Trust in Lord
PROVERBS 3:5-6
- 6 Noah
GENESIS 6:17-22
- 7 Yoke
MATTHEW 11:26-30
- 8 Way, Truth, Life
JOHN 14:1-6
- 9 Christ Died for Us
ROMANS 5:6-11
- 10 Saved by Faith
EPHESIANS 2:4-10
- 11 Benefit of Connection
JEREMIAH 17:7-8
- 12 Granted through Faith
ROMANS 4:13-25
- 13 God so Loved
JOHN 3:14-18

CORE CONCEPT 2

CULTIVATE

- 1 Known by Fruit
MATTHEW 7:15-20
- 2 Wisdom
JAMES 3:13-18
- 3 Fruit of Spirit vs. Flesh
GALATIANS 5:16-26
- 4 Greatest Command
MARK 12:28-31
- 5 Salt and Light
MATTHEW 5:13-16
- 6 Truth
MATTHEW 5:33-37
- 7 Repent
ACTS 17:28-31
- 8 Golden Rule
MATTHEW 7:12
- 9 Serve
MARK 10:42-45
- 10 What to Focus on
PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9
- 11 Faith Grows
ROMANS 5:2-5
- 12 Traits
2 PETER 2:3-8
- 13 Christian Life
COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

CORE CONCEPT 3 **CHOOSE**

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | Love One Another
JOHN 13:31-35 |
| 2 | Washing Feet
JOHN 13:12-20 |
| 3 | Humility and Service
PHILIPPIANS 2:2-8 |
| 4 | Love
1 PETER 4:8-11 |
| 5 | Established in Love
EPHESIANS 3:14-19 |
| 6 | Christ Serves
MARK 10:42-45 |
| 7 | Love Enemies
LUKE 6:27-33 |
| 8 | Elijah and Widow
1 KINGS 17:8-16 |
| 9 | Great Commission
MATTHEW 28:16-20 |
| 10 | Use Freedom Well
GALATIANS 5:13-15 |
| 11 | Unity
EPHESIANS 4:1-6 |
| 12 | Love for Saints & Growth
COLOSSIANS 1:3-12 |
| 13 | Loving and Working
1 THESSALONIANS 4:9-12 |

CORE CONCEPT 4 **COMMIT**

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | Persecution Coming
MARK 13:9-13 |
| 2 | Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego
DANIEL 3:8-18; 24-26 |
| 3 | Daniel
DANIEL 6:6-16, 19-22 |
| 4 | Prayer of Distress
PSALM 142 |
| 5 | Trials and Maturity
JAMES 1:2-18 |
| 6 | Believer's Triumph
ROMANS 8:31-39 |
| 7 | Beatitude: Persecuted
MATTHEW 5:10-12 |
| 8 | Christian Suffering
1 PETER 4:12-19 |
| 9 | Treasure in Clay Jars
2 CORINTHIANS 4:7-18 |
| 10 | Sows and Reaps
GALATIANS 5:6-10 |
| 11 | Light vs. Darkness
EPHESIANS 5:6-14 |
| 12 | Discern
PSALM 119: 65-72 |
| 13 | Stand Firm
1 THESSALONIANS 2:13-16 |

THE CORE

8 ESSENTIALS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR FAITH

FCA desires to make disciples who make disciples. To help our coaches, athletes, volunteers and staff make this happen, FCA has developed a brand-new resource called The CORE. This simple, relevant resource helps new believers journey through eight core essentials of the Christian faith.

WHERE TO FIND THE CORE

Visit thecore.fca.org/#resources to:

- Order The CORE booklets.
- Access a downloadable PDF version of The CORE.
- Start The CORE YouVersion reading plan.

WHAT ARE THE CORE ESSENTIALS?

- CORE 1** Join God's Team.
- CORE 2** Live with God's Power.
- CORE 3** Train Spiritually.
- CORE 4** Communicate with God.
- CORE 5** Study God's Playbook.
- CORE 6** Team Up with Others.
- CORE 7** Know Your Role.
- CORE 8** Share with Others.



HOW TO USE THE CORE

1-ON-1: A 1-on-1 meeting occurs when two people commit to a mentoring relationship and go through the eight sessions together.

HUDDLES: Go through The CORE with a small group of athletes or coaches. Consistently meet to review each session and share what God is teaching everyone through the study.

INDIVIDUAL: The CORE can be used as a personal Bible study to grow in your walk with Christ.

START THE JOURNEY

Athletes know this best: when you strengthen your core, everything else benefits. Start the life-changing discipleship journey at thecore.fca.org.



GET TO KNOW **FCA**

Since 1954, FCA has been challenging coaches and athletes on the professional, college, high school, junior high and youth levels to use the powerful platform of sport to reach every coach and every athlete with the transforming power of Jesus Christ. FCA focuses on serving local communities around the globe by engaging, equipping and empowering coaches and athletes to make disciples who make disciples.

VISION

To see the world transformed by Jesus Christ through the influence of coaches and athletes.

MISSION

To lead every coach and athlete into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His church.

VALUES

Integrity, Serving,
Teamwork, Excellence



For general questions on FCA and how to find local FCA staff, visit **FCA.ORG** or call **1-800-289-0909**.

GET INVOLVED WITH **FCA**



DAILY IMPACT PLAY

Geared toward Christian coaches and athletes, **Daily Impact Play** is an email newsletter and social media outlet to engage, equip and empower readers to be stronger Christian competitors. Sign up to receive Daily Impact Play devotionals every day.



YOUVERSION

Follow FCA in the Bible app. FCA's reading plans plug you into God's Word with a competitor mindset and offer you a variety of topics that relate to you and where you are in your spiritual journey as a coach or athlete. Start a reading plan today.



FCA RESOURCES

Visit **FCA Resources** to access Bible studies, videos, devotionals, reading plans, daily Bible challenges and more. Share the content with your FCA Huddle or other coaches and athletes through the group feature. With the FCA app, you can track your progress, customize your discipleship experience and more!

PROVEN
JOHN 15:8



COMPETITOR'S CREED

I AM A CHRISTIAN FIRST AND LAST.

I am created in the likeness of God Almighty to bring Him glory. I am a member of Team Jesus Christ. I wear the colors of the cross.

I AM A COMPETITOR NOW AND FOREVER.

I am made to strive, to strain, to stretch and to succeed in the arena of competition. I am a Christian Competitor and as such, I face my challenger with the face of Christ.

I DO NOT TRUST IN MYSELF.

I do not boast in my abilities or believe in my own strength. I rely solely on the power of God. I compete for the pleasure of my Heavenly Father, the honor of Christ and the reputation of the Holy Spirit.

MY ATTITUDE ON AND OFF THE FIELD IS ABOVE REPROACH— MY CONDUCT BEYOND CRITICISM.

Whether I am preparing, practicing or playing, I submit to God's authority and those He has put over me. I respect my coaches, officials, teammates and competitors out of respect for the Lord.

MY BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST.

I protect it from within and without. Nothing enters my body that does not honor the Living God. My sweat is an offering to my Master. My soreness is a sacrifice to my Savior.

I GIVE MY ALL—ALL THE TIME.

I do not give up. I do not give in. I do not give out. I am the Lord's warrior—a competitor by conviction and a disciple of determination. I am confident beyond reason because my confidence lies in Christ. The result of my efforts must result in His glory.

LET THE COMPETITION BEGIN. LET THE GLORY BE GOD'S.

