



# Parent Guide

**PROVEN**  
*JOHN 15:8*

# PROVEN



## DEAR PARENTS,

FCA is excited to partner with you and your athlete in his or her faith journey as we journey from trying to prove ourselves to living as proven in Christ. This journey is one that takes a lifetime and is full of opportunities for meaningful conversations and study together. The Proven ministry theme is broken into four core concepts. This guide is designed to equip you for study together with your athlete to go deeper into each of the core concepts. Discovery Bible Study and additional Scriptures are also provided to help you dig deeper into God's Word as a family. Our prayer is that this resource draws you as a family into deeper relationship with the Lord.

Your Partner in Discipleship,  
**FCA Resources Team**

## CORE CONCEPTS



### **Core 1: Connect**

**John 15:1-7**

Truth: He proved His love for us that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. We prove that we are His disciples by connecting to Jesus Christ and remaining in His love.



### **Core 2: Cultivate**

**John 15:8-11**

Truth: We prove that we are Jesus' disciples by the cultivating the fruit of the spirit in our lives. By connecting to Christ, we grow in Christ-like character by remaining in His love and keeping His commands.



### **Core 3: Choose**

**John 15:12-17**

Truth: We prove that we are His disciples by choosing to follow Jesus' command to love one another through sacrifice and service. He chose us first so we can produce fruit and make disciples.



### **Core 4: Commit**

**John 15:18-27**

Truth: When we connect to Christ, cultivate Christ-like character and choose to love others, then we stay committed through the challenges.

# 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.

Scan the QR code to download and print a template



# 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**.



# CORE CONCEPT 1: CONNECT

“I AM THE TRUE VINE, AND MY FATHER IS THE GARDENER.” - JOHN 15:1

## Who is the True Vine?

### ONE Sentence Summary:

- Life is like a game of tag with sin constantly trying to trap us, but Jesus sets us free and empowers us to grow in a true relationship with God, the gardener who nurtures our hearts so we can thrive and become who He created us to be.

### TWO Ways to Encourage Your Athlete:

- Our athletes are wired to want to please us and often default to performing for our affection. We must consistently reprogram their hearts to understand that our love (like God's) is freely given. Find ways to let them know that they don't need to prove anything to earn your love.
- Our athletes will replicate what we celebrate. When you see them model good habits, let them know that you see it and make a big deal about it!

### THREE Questions to Ask Them:

- Have you ever thought about God as a gardener before? What types of “weeds” in your life do you think He wants to help you remove?
- What things (entertainment, money, food, sports, relationships) do you often look to for significance?
- If God is described as a gardener, what do you think He thinks about sports?

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# CORE CONCEPT 1: CONNECT

**“I AM THE VINE; YOU ARE THE BRANCHES. THE ONE WHO REMAINS IN ME AND I IN HIM PRODUCES MUCH FRUIT, BECAUSE YOU CAN DO NOTHING WITHOUT ME.” - JOHN 15:5**

## **Growing with the Vine**

### **ONE Sentence Summary:**

- Just as a team needs a coach to guide, teach and help them improve, we need Jesus to lead us in life, pruning away what holds us back so we can grow, thrive and fulfill our purpose.

### **TWO Ways to Encourage Your Athlete:**

- If we are complaining about the coach in public or even in the privacy of our homes, our young athletes will take that as a license to do the same. One of the ways we teach them to respect the coach is through modeling in our own life. The encouragement to “listen to coach” is a way to help our athletes grow in humility, learning that they don’t always have all of the answers.
- If your athlete plays sports long enough, chances are they will have a coach that they complain about. These moments offer teachable opportunities to validate their frustrations but also teach them about a path forward that involves not gossiping and encouraging them to go right to the source (the coach) if they have issues.

### **THREE Questions to Ask:**

- If Jesus coached your team, how do you think you would respond to His coaching?
- What’s stopping you from reading the Bible (God’s playbook) every day? Is there anything I could do to help?
- Do you think Jesus wants to help you when you play your sport? What things do you think you could ask Him for?

# CORE CONCEPT 2: CULTIVATE

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

## **Fruit is Produced**

### **ONE Sentence Summary:**

- Just as an athlete works hard to please their coach, we bring joy to God by growing the Fruit of the Spirit, staying connected to Jesus and living as evidence that we are on His team.

### **TWO Ways to Encourage Your Athlete:**

- The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. When we see these character traits in our athletes while they play sports, let's make sure we celebrate them as much (or more!) as when we celebrate their athletic accomplishments.
- Pick one of the virtues from the list above and encourage your athlete to put that into practice during their next practice or game. It can be as simple as saying “Hey, I love you and I'm proud of you before you even step on the field today. But don't forget to practice self-control out there!” This reminds them that they need to work on self-control, but not because doing so will make you love them more.

### **THREE Questions to Ask:**

- What is something you learned about the Fruit of the Spirit?
- Do you think growing in the Fruit of the Spirit would help you or hurt you in sports? Why?
- How do you think God is using your sports experience to grow your patience or self-control or love?

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# CORE CONCEPT 2: CULTIVATE

**“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 15:10-11**

## **Joy is the Result**

### **ONE Sentence Summary:**

- Just as listening to a coach helps athletes fully enjoy the game, obeying God’s commands keeps us in His love, allowing us to experience the true joy and purpose He created for our lives.

### **TWO Ways to Encourage Your Athlete:**

- Remaining in Jesus can be hard. And while sports don’t offer a 1:1 ratio with our faith, the truth is that remaining in sports can be difficult too. 70% of competitors quit before the age of 13. One of the best ways to keep them involved and participating is to keep making sports fun. Encourage play. Encourage joy. Encourage fun. These are the ingredients that will help them remain in sports!
- If your athlete finds themselves on the bench, one way to encourage them is helping them think through how they can be the best bench player possible. Help them think through what it looks like practically to be a great bench player—and then celebrate with them when you see them do it! This is probably obvious but save that celebration for the car ride home. Screaming out “Great job on the bench, buddy!” might be embarrassing for them!

### **THREE Questions to Ask:**

- Is there anything I am doing or saying that causes you to not enjoy sports?
- What could I do to make sports more enjoyable for you?
- How do you think God feels when He watches you play sports?

# CORE CONCEPT 3: CHOOSE

**“THIS IS MY COMMAND: LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. NO ONE HAS GREATER LOVE THAN THIS: TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.” - JOHN 15:12-13**

## **Extend the Vine to Our Friends**

### **ONE Sentence Summary:**

- Just as you eagerly share the best slushie with a thirsty friend, we should share Jesus’ love—selflessly and sacrificially—because He first loved us and gave His life so we could truly live.

### **TWO Ways to Encourage Your Athlete:**

- Sports are often reflective of the rest of life. And the way life often works is that the winners hang out with the winners and the rest form their own groups. One simple way to encourage our athletes is to help them see people the way Jesus sees them. And Jesus consistently moved toward those who were hurting, sick, and unseen. Jesus hung out with the losers and the benchwarmers. Encourage your athlete to find practical ways to show love and care to their teammates who don’t have as many friends.
- Again, our athletes will replicate what we celebrate. If we see them move lovingly toward a teammate or even an opponent, we must celebrate that. If we steward sports correctly, they can help our kids learn to love others. We must be the ones that teach this and encourage it!

### **THREE Questions to Ask:**

- What are some of the things you love the most about being on a team?
- Who are your favorite teammates? What is it about them that you most enjoy?
- What do you think it looks like to show love to your teammates?

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# CORE CONCEPT 3: CHOOSE

**“YOU ARE MY FRIENDS IF YOU DO WHAT I COMMAND YOU. THIS IS WHAT I COMMAND YOU: LOVE ONE ANOTHER.” - JOHN 15:14;17**

## **Be His Friend**

### **ONE Sentence Summary:**

- Jesus, like the wise and kind older teammate, wants to be our friend, guiding, supporting, and transforming us so we can grow, help others, and share His love.

### **TWO Ways to Encourage Your Athlete:**

- Trying to integrate faith and sports is challenging. One foundational principle worth learning at an early age is the idea that Jesus is with us through the highs and lows of sport. We can encourage our athletes to grow in this by helping them understand that Jesus is accessible while they play. We can encourage them to ask Jesus for guidance, rely on Him for peace and trust Him when things get hard. Sports are not a timeout from practicing our faith. Jesus wants it all!
- The life of Jesus also offers a visible way to love others. Jesus sacrificed everything for the people He loved. When our kids are struggling with a teammate, coach or opponent, we can encourage them with a question like “How do you think Jesus would respond in this situation?” This isn’t to shame them, but to help them see life through Jesus’ eyes.

### **THREE Questions to Ask:**

- What kind of athlete do you think Jesus would be? Why?
- What does it mean to be a friend? And how can you practice that with your teammates?
- Who are the players on your team that get the least amount of playing time? How do you think you could encourage them next practice or game?

# CORE CONCEPT 4: COMMIT

**“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**

## **Committed to the Vine With Others**

### **ONE Sentence Summary:**

- Being a Christian means being on God’s team and facing opposition from the enemy—but by listening to our Coach, supporting our teammates, and staying focused on Him, we can play the game of life with confidence and joy.

### **TWO Ways to Encourage Your Athlete:**

- Among the many life lessons that can be taught through sports is how to respond when adversity hits. We would do well to help our athletes be proactive and expect this to come. One simple way to encourage them to stay grounded when opponents get nasty is to have a mantra that you repeat enough where it becomes a soundtrack played in their head on repeat. Something as simple and potentially cheesy as “When they bring their worst, we bring our best.” Choose your own. Say it often. When adversity hits, they will be equipped.
- There will be times when our athletes respond to opponents and officials in a way that doesn’t reflect the character of Jesus and/or our own family values. When that happens, remember, it’s a teachable moment. Even though the rest of the world believes that sport is everything, we must be the ones who keep a level head and leverage hard moments to sharpen character. In these moments, our athletes don’t need us to berate them, they need a hug, a reassurance that we love them, and an encouragement to respond differently next time.

### **THREE Questions to Ask:**

- What are the moments in sports that make you most prone to lose your cool?
- How could learning more about God and His character help you in times when sports and life get hard?
- Who in your life handles hard moments the best? What have you noticed about the way they respond?

# CORE CONCEPT 4: COMMIT

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

## Committed to the Vine On Our Own

### ONE Sentence Summary:

- The Christian life can feel lonely at times, but just like a coach running alongside an athlete, the Holy Spirit lives within us to guide, strengthen and encourage us, ensuring we never run the race alone.

### TWO Ways to Encourage Your Athlete:

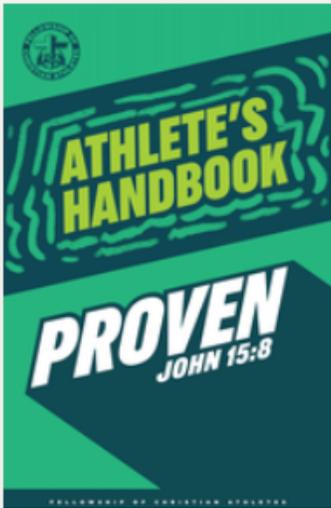
- Sports provides a beautiful playing field for our athletes to grow in the understanding that God is with them. We can encourage our kids before they practice and play that “God is with you. He is not distant. He is not in the top corner of the stadium. He is right there with you. He is near.”
- In the heat of the moment, it’s hard to remember to think about God, let alone to remember that He is with us. A practical way to encourage them toward a posture of practicing and playing with God’s presence is to teach our athletes that “Halftime is His Time” or another mantra like it. It’s a sticky phrase that encourages them to use the down time in sports (timeouts, between periods, breaks in the action) to refocus and remember that God is with them.

### THREE Questions to Ask:

- What did you learn about the Holy Spirit?
- How does it feel to know that God (through His Spirit) is always with you, even when you play sports?
- What are the “down times” in your sport and how could you use those breaks in the action to acknowledge that God is right there with you?

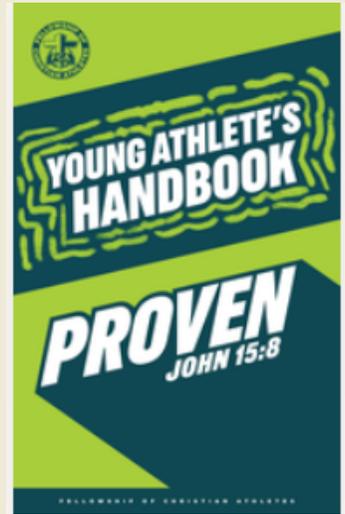
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**FELLOWSHIP OF  
CHRISTIAN  
ATHLETES**