

# GOD GIVES US THE GIFT OF SPORTS

James 1:17 (NIRV) *“Every good and perfect gift is from God.”*

## FOR COACHES:

Whether we recognize them or not, God has given us many good and perfect gifts including the gift of sports. God gives us this gift so we might grow to be more Christ-like character and to help us help others to do the same. Ask God to help your players grasp this concept. Below are some helpful questions and discussion points.

### Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:

- In what ways is God using sports in my life to help me be more Christ-like?
- What areas of my life would I like to see God change through sports?

### Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:

- God gives us many good and perfect gifts including sports
- Sports builds Christ-like character and honors God

### Questions to ask your team:

- What kinds of things does God want us to learn through sports?
- How can God use sports to make us more like Him?

## FOR PLAYERS:

Did you know college and professional athletes are given gifts when they play in championship games? Sponsors give them things like gift cards, sunglasses, and electronics. They hope players will use them because it will make money for their company. God gives us gifts too, but the gifts He gives us are for our good. His gifts will never wear out, get lost or stolen. God designed them to last our whole lives. One of the gifts God gives us is sports. He gives us sports to help us be more like His Son Jesus. When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- What kinds of gifts does God give us?
- Why does God give us gifts like sports?
- What kinds of things does God want me to learn by playing sports?
- How can I show I am thankful for the gifts God gives me?

## FOR PARENTS:

Whether they recognize them or not, God has given your child many good and perfect gifts. This week he/she will be learning about God's gift of sports. He/she will learn that the motive behind this generous gift is His love. God has a plan for using sports in your child's life in ways that are unique and specifically designed with him/her in mind. Pray for your child this week asking God to help them grasp the concept of sports as a gift from God. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

Things to talk about:

- What are some of the best gifts our family has ever been given?
- Why does God give us gifts?
- What does it mean that sports are a gift from God?
- How can sports help us to learn to be more like Jesus?
- Why is it important to thank God for His gifts such as sports?

# SPORTS ARE FOR GLORY

I Corinthians 10:31 (NIRV) *“So eat and drink and do everything else for the glory of God.”*

## **FOR COACHES:**

The world holds sports and those who play them in high esteem – players and coaches alike are idolized and showered with praise and accolades for their skills. Our view of sports should be different from the world’s. In God’s eyes, the playing field is not just an arena where games are won or lost but rather ground for us to grow spiritually. God gives us opportunities through sports experiences to glorify Him – but we must choose – Will you choose to play and coach in such a way that anything you do will be done for His glory?

### **Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:**

- Why is it important to understand that sports are for glory?
- In what ways am I glorifying God in my coaching?
- How have I grown spiritually through sports? How can I grow even more?

### **Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:**

- God gives us sports for His glory
- Our words can glorify God, but so can our attitudes, actions and associations with others

### **Questions to ask your team:**

- How would your attitude, actions and associations with others change if you played for God’s glory?
- Besides sports, what are other areas of your life where you want to glorify God?

## **FOR PLAYERS:**

Have you ever been praised or rewarded for something good you did? It makes us happy when others recognize our accomplishments. God did something good when He gave us the gift of sports, and His heart is pleased when we recognize Him for it. His desire is that you will play sports in ways that are Christ-like. By doing that, you bring honor and glory to the One who loves you so much.

When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- Why is it important to give glory and honor to God as we play sports?
- What attitudes would be honoring to God as you play, and which ones would not?
- Can you describe a time when you played in a game and honored God?

## **FOR PARENTS:**

The benefits of sports are undeniable: physical, mental and social rewards come with the package. Sometimes athletes fall prey to letting praise associated with a job well done go to their head (and heart). Their play becomes all about the glory it brings to them. At ISO, sports are done differently. We recognize God has a purpose for sports and understand it is designed not only to benefit us but bring glory to Him. This doesn’t come naturally as we humans are happily inclined to let the world revolve around us. Honoring God in sports comes when our priority is: in anything we do, we do it for His glory. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- What are ways our family honors God and gives Him glory?
- Why does God deserve our praises and honor?
- Who do you know that gives God glory in sports or in other areas of their lives? What does that look like?
- What attitudes and actions in our lives bring God glory? Which ones do not? How can we change that?

# SPORTS REVEAL BROKENNESS

Psalm 51:2 (CEV) *“Wash me clean from all of my sin and guilt.”*

## FOR COACHES:

You don't have to look far in the headlines to see stories of athletes whose behaviors have brought disgrace to them and their teams and disappointment to their fans. No matter the sport or the level of play, their brokenness is revealed to the world when they choose to cheat, exhibit poor sportsmanship and make other poor choices. This brokenness isn't reserved just for athletes. Coaches and their staff are also vulnerable. Lapses in judgement and wrongdoing, or sin, impact their ability to coach and to enjoy the blessings that sports have to offer. But God's desire is that players and coaches not remain in this brokenness. It's what He desires for everyone including you. He proved it when He sent His Son Jesus to forgive our sin and guilt. He desires is that you trust Him as Savior because then He can use sports to reveal wholeness instead of brokenness.

### Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:

- Are there areas of my life where brokenness is revealed as I coach my team?
- Have I considered asking God to heal this brokenness?
- How would my coaching be different if I asked God to keep my principles, priorities and pride in check?

### Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:

- God can use sports to reveal areas of brokenness (or sin) in our lives
- God is willing to heal us of brokenness through His Son Jesus

### Questions to ask your team:

- What happens when players and coaches don't follow the rules of the game?
- Can God use sports to show us sin or brokenness in our lives? How?

## FOR PLAYERS:

Sometimes players make poor choices when they play sports. They might cheat or play unfairly or even treat their teammates or the other team disrespectfully. Their broken behavior probably caused trouble for them and their teammates. In God's eyes, these broken behaviors are called sin. But the good news is that God is willing to forgive broken behavior when we ask Him to because of what His Son Jesus did on the cross. When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- What is broken behavior in sports? What does it look like?
- What does God say about broken behavior? What does He promise to help us do about it?

## FOR PARENTS:

For the past few weeks your child has been learning about God's good gift of sports. But in sports, as in other areas of our lives, sometimes brokenness is revealed. Players and coaches sometimes fall into the trap of compromising their principles when they break the rules of the game. Or, they may let pride take over their hearts resulting in sour attitudes that infect them, their team and their families. Perhaps they elevate sports above everything in their lives. This brokenness has a simpler name – 'sin'. But God promises that brokenness revealed can result in a life healed when a person trusts Jesus as Savior and asks Him to forgive that sin. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful:

- What are ways we have seen brokenness in sports? What did it look like? What was the result to the player, their team and their fans?
- Why is it important to be able to recognize brokenness in our behavior and attitudes?
- How can God heal brokenness in our lives as we play sports and in other areas of our lives?
- What are some of God's promises when we confess that brokenness to Him?

## **WE FAIL IN OUR EFFORTS PLAYING SPORTS**

2 Corinthians 3:5 (NIRV) *“We are not able to claim anything for ourselves.  
The power to do what we do comes from God.”*

### **FOR COACHES:**

Let's face it – we play sports to win. Nobody ever signs on to coach or play hoping to lose. Success is the goal, and we do all we can to make that happen. We rely on our strength and skills – we push ourselves and maybe our team to get the job done and bring in a win. And sometimes, we fall short – everything we've done, everything we've attempted to implement seems to be wasted effort. We fail in our efforts and are left feeling insufficient. Because God has given you the gift of coaching, you don't have to do it in your own strength. He will walk alongside you. It is through His sufficiency that you will have what it takes to coach and coach well.

### **Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:**

- Have there been failures in my coaching that I could share with my team?
- How am I giving God credit for His help in my coaching?
- What areas in my coaching seem insufficient that I need God's help with?

### **Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:**

- Sometimes, no matter how hard we try, we fail in sports
- God walks alongside us to give us what we need even when we fail

### **Questions to ask your team:**

- Have you ever failed at something in sports?
- Why is it important to ask God for His help in doing sports? How can we give Him credit for His help?

### **FOR PLAYERS:**

Even the best athletes fail sometimes in their sport. They practiced and trained as hard as they could and had all the right equipment but didn't achieve a win. Or, maybe they failed as a team member when they took most of the credit when they did win. That may have happened to you. But even when you fail at sports God promises to be with you. He wants you to understand that you can't do sports well in your own power. But He promises that He will give you all you need to do your best.

When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- Do I ask God to give me everything I need to be a good player?
- What are ways I can give credit to God for His help when I play?

### **FOR PARENTS:**

You've seen the news stories about unfair calls at games resulting in an all-out brawl – not between players but between parents and coaches or officials. Children may sometimes fail in sports, but parents can as well. And, sometimes they feel insufficient for the task of being a sports parent. God promises us that He will equip us with everything we need to do the jobs He has set before us. That includes parenting of a player and doing it well. We may fall short in our efforts, but He give us what we need if we ask Him and will always be there to walk alongside us. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- What are some ways players and parents might fail in sports? Has that happened to our family?
- What ways can we ask God to help equip us to participate in sports?
- What do we know about God's promises to help us do things He has given us to do?
- How can we give God credit for the ways He helps us whether we win or lose?

## **SPORTS DON'T DETERMINE WHO WE ARE**

Philippians 2:3 (NLV) *“Nothing should be done because of pride or thinking about yourself. Think of other people as more important than yourself.”*

### **FOR COACHES:**

It's easy to let our game wins go to our heads, and equally as easy to let losses go to our hearts. It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking, “If my team wins, I am a winner. If they lose, I must be a loser.” But God did not design sports to help us determine who we are. His design is that we will know who we are because of His great love for us in sending us His Son, Jesus. God uses sports as a tool in our lives to develop us in ways that are pleasing to Him. He will give you opportunities with your team to develop Christ-like character whether you have a win or a loss.

### **Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:**

- What are my attitudes toward winning? Toward losing?
- Have I allowed my team's success (or not) to impact how I think about myself?
- What ways do I want God to develop my attitudes in winning? In losing?
- How can I help my players and their families understand that sports don't determine who we are?

### **Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:**

- Our wins or our losses do not determine who we are
- God wants us to develop Christ-like character whether we win or lose

### **Questions to ask your team:**

- Where do you think our importance and value come from? Are we only important when we win?
- What are some ways losing a game can help us? What about winning a game?

### **FOR PLAYERS:**

When we win, we feel great – on top of the world. It is easy to think because we won, we are winners. Maybe our attitudes start to show we think we are more important than others. When we lose, we feel awful – at the bottom of the barrel. It is easy to think because we lost, we are losers. Maybe our attitudes are sour and disrespectful to others, and maybe we want to quit. Whether your team wins or loses does not determine your value. That's because your value comes from God who loved you enough to send His Son Jesus to forgive your sin. When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- What kinds of things does God want to teach me when my team wins?
- What kinds of things does God want to teach me when my team loses?

### **FOR PARENTS:**

It's normal to want your child to be part of a winning team. As a parent you understand how important successes can be. But it can be a heavy burden on a child when they perceive that their (or their team's) performance equals their value. This week's redemptive quality is designed to help your child understand that sports does not determine who they are or how valuable they are. God wants them to understand that their importance comes from Him and not whether they win or lose. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- How important is winning to our family? Why?
- Does winning make us winners? Does losing make us losers?
- What kinds of behavior honors God when we win? When we lose?
- Why is it important to understand that whether we win or lose, we are valued?

## SPORTS TEACH US HOW TO COMPETE

Galatians 5:26 (CEV) *“But don’t be conceited or make others jealous by claiming to be better than they are.”*

### FOR COACHES:

Sports is built on competition: us against them. Competition comes complete with an ‘in it to win it’ attitude and a thirst to defeat an opponent. The world’s view of competition is for players and coaches to crush and destroy a rival. Compete against them, take home a win, and then take the glory for ourselves or the team. God gave us competition as a gift. He does desire that we strive to win but to do competition His way. His design for competition is that we will compete ‘with’ our rivals for the purpose of bringing glory to Him. As a coach, you have the opportunity to model competing God’s way by the way you treat other teams and coaches.

### Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:

- Why is competition important to me? Is wanting to win wrong?
- In what ways do I view competition the way the world does? The way that God does?
- What is my goal in competing?
- How can I show my players what Godly competition looks like in my interactions with our opponents?

### Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:

- Competition is a good thing God has given us
- We can compete against our opponent or we can compete with them

### Questions to ask your team:

- What does the world tell us about competition and our opponents?
- How is this different from the way God wants us to compete?

### FOR PLAYERS:

You probably have a favorite sports team, and you probably know who their biggest rival is. It is fun watching them compete especially when your team wins. Competing in sports is fun, and it is a gift from God. He wants us to learn how to compete His way. We do that by competing with our opponent and not against them. He wants us to compete in ways that honor Him rather than ourselves or our team. We do that when we recognize the achievements of our opponents and give Him the credit when we win. When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- Why is competing a good thing? How does God want me to compete?
- What does it mean to compete with my opponent rather than against my opponent?

### FOR PARENTS:

Our world is bursting with opportunities for competition: in sports, in our workplaces, in our social circles, to name a few. Your child’s competition in sports is important because of the skills and character development it offers. But there are downsides to competing when it becomes a vehicle for winning at all costs regardless of the price an opponent suffers. It can also be detrimental to players when they begin to develop attitudes of superiority when they win. This season, your child will learn about healthy, Godly competition. They will learn what it means to compete with an opponent rather than against them by recognizing the value and efforts of a rival. They will learn what it means to compete in a way that God gets the glory. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- Why is competing important? Why is competition part of the fun in sports?
- What are some activities where we compete as a family?
- What does it mean to compete with our opponent rather than against them?
- How are we honoring God by the way we compete?

## WE TRUST OUR COACH BY RESPONDING

Titus 3:1 (NIRV) *“Remind God’s people to obey rulers and authorities. Remind them to be ready to do what is good.”*

### FOR COACHES:

There is no escaping authority and rules. They exist in every government, school, church, and family, but God is the highest authority of all. He has provided earthly authority and rules for our benefit. As a coach, you represent authority to your team. It is important that they submit to your leadership by following the rules and being obedient to instructions. For them to do that, they will look to you to model submission to authority – authority of the game officials, authority to ISO leadership and the authority of God. To help you do that, Jesus modeled submission to authority in order that you would be obedient and ready to do every good thing He gives you to do.

#### Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:

- Who or what are the authorities in your life? How would you rate your submission to them?
- Why is it important for you as a coach to model submission to authority?
- What can you do to help your team understand that submitting to authority benefits them?
- How will you model submission to authority?

#### Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:

- God gives us rules and people in authority for our benefit.
- Submitting to authority, listening and obeying help us be ready for the good things God gives us to do

#### Questions to ask your team:

- Why is important for us to have rules and people in authority?
- What are ways we can submit to the authority?

### FOR PLAYERS:

There are rules for home, rules for school, rules for sports. Lots of rules to learn and lots of people to teach them. Your parents and ISO coaches are responsible for helping you know the rules, but you are responsible for following them. God wants us to follow the rules by trusting those people in authority in our lives. He wants us to listen and obey their instructions and to follow their rules. Jesus is our model for being obedient because He obeyed God when He came to earth to die on the cross for our sin. When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- Why is it important to follow rules and to be obedient to those in authority?
- What does submission to authority mean, and what does it look like?

### FOR PARENTS:

There are rules for just about everything in life including rules in our homes. Parents represent the authority to whom children are accountable for following those rules. More than anyone, they understand the importance of having their children trust them and submit to their authority by listening and being obedient to the household rules. God places high priority on submission and obedience to those in authority over us. But He didn’t leave us stranded trying to figure out how to do that. When Jesus came to earth to die on the cross, He was being obedient to His heavenly Father and exemplified submission to authority. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- Why is authority important in our lives? In our home? At school?
- What are rules that our family has established that are important to obey?
- Why is important for us to obey rules?
- What authorities in our lives do we have opportunities to submit to? How well are we doing that?

## **WE ARE DEPENDENT ON TEAMMATES**

I Peter 3:8-9 (ICB) *“All of you should live together in peace. Try to understand each other. Love each other as brothers. Be kind and humble.”*

### **FOR COACHES:**

Sports is not a one man show. Whether team or individual sport, athletes and coaches are dependent on others – teammates, trainers, officials, etc. But you might not think that when an attitude of self-importance inhibits their ability to see the value in others. God has created us to be dependent on Him, and He created us to see value in others. As a coach, you have a tremendous opportunity to show your team that each one of them is valued and equally important, each deserves opportunities in the game, and each deserves acknowledgement for their effort and accomplishments. God has given you a chance to help your team learn to replace selfish attitudes by recognizing the value of each of their teammates.

#### **Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:**

- What do I know about the value God has placed on me? On my team? On our opponents?
- Are there attitudes I hold that are selfish and honoring only to me?
- What are some ways I can show my team how valuable they are – to God and to each other?
- Are there things in my coaching that I need to change?

#### **Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:**

- God values each of us equally.
- When we value the effort of every teammate, we honor God

#### **Questions to ask your team:**

- How do we know that God values each of us?
- Why is it important for us to understand that God values others as much as He does us?

### **FOR PLAYERS:**

Did you know that you are of great value to God? In His eyes, you are the MVP even if you are not the best player on your team or make a mistake during a game. God values your teammates and wants you to value them too. How can you do that? You can do it by not being a ball-hog. You can cheerfully sacrifice some of your playing time so they can play. You can give them praise in their effort and achievement. You can congratulate them when they win (and really mean it). When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- Why is it important to value my teammates? Our opponents?
- What are some things I can do to show my teammates I value them? Or my coaches? Or our opponents?

### **FOR PARENTS:**

Our world puts athletes and coaches on a pedestal. The trouble with being on a pedestal is that there isn't room for more than one individual. Your child is participating in ISO as a member of a team. God's value on your child and every player on his or her team is a wide platform and makes room for everyone. This isn't just about good sportsmanship or playing fair. It is about playing in such a way that God gets honor, and everyone understands their tremendous value they have in His eyes. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- Why is it important to know God values us?
- Why is it important to know God values everyone?
- What can we do to show we value each other?
- What would our actions and attitudes look like if we thought of everyone as valuable?

## SPORTS AREN'T ALWAYS FAIR

James 4:3 (ISV) *“You ask for something but do not get it because you ask for it for the wrong reason — for your own pleasure.”*

### FOR COACHES:

You've prepared for the game - pushing your team to play their best, sharpening skills through the drills. In fact, compared to other teams, yours is head and shoulders above the rest. And then, your team still loses. Maybe it was because players didn't execute what you taught them. Maybe it was a blown call by an official. It just doesn't seem fair. You want the reward and recognition that come from all the hard work you've put in. So, you're faced with a choice. You can steam and stew over the unfairness or you can learn what God teaches about grace. God gave you grace even when it was unfair that His Son took the punishment for your sin. His desire is that you will accept His grace and learn to give it to others – even when they've done nothing to deserve it.

### Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:

- Where have I experienced unfairness when coaching?
- Have I ever contributed to unfairness that others experience?
- Am I fair in my coaching to all my players? If not, what do I need to change?
- Why do I need God's grace? Why do I need to extend grace to others?

### Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:

- Sometimes, even when we try our best, sports can be unfair
- We can be unfair to others when we seek to get all the attention and recognition for ourselves

### Questions to ask your team:

- As a player, have you ever felt that things have been unfair? Why?
- Was it fair for Jesus to take the punishment for our sin?

### FOR PLAYERS:

You can practice harder than anyone else, and then a teammate makes a mistake, or an official misses a call and your team loses. It just doesn't seem fair. You can choose to focus on that loss, or you can ask God to help you focus on Him. He gave you grace when He didn't punish you for the things you've done wrong or when you didn't measure up. That is called grace. He can teach you to give grace to others even when things have been unfair. When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- What can I learn to do when things are unfair?
- Why should I give grace to others?

### FOR PARENTS:

“It's just not fair!” Have you ever said it? Have you ever heard it from your child? Sometimes things are truly unfair, but sometimes our sense of being wronged and the unfairness of a situation is the result of what we perceive we deserve. We don't get the job we wanted even though we have the skill and the experience. We don't get the credit we should have been given even though we worked harder than anyone else. Focusing on God's grace can help us maneuver the landmine of unfairness. It wasn't fair that Jesus took our punishment for sin. He gave us what we didn't deserve – the opportunity to have eternal life in Heaven with Him when we trust Him as Savior. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- What are some examples of unfairness our family has experienced?
- Have we ever been unfair to others?
- What are some things we can do when things seem unfair?
- How does God want us to handle unfairness in our lives?

## **WE ARE TO FOLLOW THE RULES; PENALIZED IF WE DON'T**

Proverbs 13:13 (ERV) *“Those who reject a command hurt themselves; those who respect a command will be rewarded.”*

### **FOR COACHES:**

The list of infractions is long. The list of ruined lives when coaches reject the rules of play is even longer. The trauma resulting from their actions penalized not just the coach, but their team, their fans and their families. Their rejection of sports rules created loss of finances, reputation and in many cases relationships. As a coach you have an awesome opportunity to teach your team what it looks like to respect the rules of your sport as well as God's rules by the way you follow them. And you have the privilege of helping them understand the consequences when the rules are not followed and the rewards when they are.

#### **Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:**

- Are there areas in my coaching where I reject the rules? Where I respect the rules?
- What examples in my life can I share with my team about lessons I learned when I rejected rules?
- What examples in my life can I share with my team about lessons I learned when I respected rules?
- How can I teach my team respect for the rules?

#### **Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:**

- When we reject rules, there are penalties to ourselves and others
- When we respect rules, there are rewards for ourselves and others

#### **Questions to ask your team:**

- Why are there penalties for rejecting rules?
- What kinds of rules does God give us that He wants us to respect?

### **FOR PLAYERS:**

Being offside, holding and roughing a player are examples of behaviors that break sports rules. When players do these things, they can be penalized with loss of court or field advantage, loss of points and loss of play time. If a player rejects the rules of the game, they suffer the consequences, and so does their team. When they respect these rules, there are consequences but positive ones. If a player respects the rules of the game, they benefit from the rewards, and so does their team. When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- When have I not respected the rules of my sport? What happened?
- What rules does God want me to follow? What happens when I do? What happens when I don't?

### **FOR PARENTS:**

Running red lights and stop signs, not paying your taxes, taking something belonging to someone else – each is an example of the rejection of rules put in place for our protection and benefit. The consequences can be devastating, and the penalties crushing. While the consequences of breaking rules of sports may not be as traumatic as someone running a red light, there is a price to pay. Throughout this season your child has been learning the rules of the sport and about God's rules. This week, the focus has been on the consequences for rejecting the rules and the rewards when they are followed. They are learning how their choice impacts them and their team. They are learning how God honors respect for rules and allows penalties when they are rejected. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- What have been some of the consequences or penalties when the rules of our home have been broken?
- What have been some of the rewards for respecting the rules of our home?
- Why should there be penalties when rules are broken?
- What does God want us to know about respecting His rules? Rejecting His rules?

## WE LEARN HOW TO SACRIFICE FOR OUR TEAM

John 15:13 (ICB) *“The greatest love a person can show is to die for his friends.”*

### FOR COACHES:

Woven throughout this season have been opportunities for sacrifice. More skilled players may have had to sacrifice playing time to let less skilled players in the game. Players may have sacrificed their control of the ball by giving it to another player allowing them to score. An injured or tired player may have sacrificed their position allowing a substitute to take over. You and your family have sacrificed time and energy for the good of your team. Families have sacrificed their schedules to get their child to practice and games. Also woven into this season have been opportunities to hear about the greatest sacrifice of all – Jesus’ substitutionary death on the cross. It is because of His sacrifice that we have the opportunity to win in our earthly lives and to win eternity.

### Personal Reflection - Questions to ask yourself:

- What sacrifices did I observe from my players and their families? From other teams? From the officials?
- Have I helped my players understand the importance of sacrifice?
- How has Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross impacted my life?
- What have I learned about the importance of sacrifice?

### Discussion points to talk about with your team and their families:

- Jesus sacrificed His life on the cross for each of us
- Sacrifice reveals great love

### Questions to ask your team:

- Why did Jesus have to die on the cross?
- What more do you want to know about Jesus’ sacrifice?

### FOR PLAYERS:

Have you ever given up something you really liked or wanted? If it meant a lot to you, then it was a sacrifice to give it up. Sacrificing something is usually hard. This season, you have been learning how to sacrifice for the good your team. You may have given up playing time or time when you controlled the ball so your teammates could score. Did you know that Jesus made the greatest sacrifice in all the world? Because of sin, we deserved God’s punishment. But Jesus became our substitute and died on the cross, so we didn’t have to be punished. When you practice and play this week, think about these questions:

- Were there times this season that I sacrificed for my team?
- Why is Jesus sacrifice on the cross important for me to know about and understand?

### FOR PARENTS:

When it comes to sacrifice, families win the prize. Juggling schedules, rearranging priorities and battling fatigue become the way of life when a child is involved in sports. And of course, there’s the little thing of the dip in the checkbook balance. There is a cost involved in sacrifice, but you consider it worth it because you love your child and because of the benefits it brings. Because you are loved, God set His schedule, implemented His priority and battled evil to sacrifice His Son. When Jesus stepped in as our substitute to pay the penalty for our sin, there was great cost, but He considered it worth it because of the benefits to us. As a family, below are some things to talk about and questions that may be helpful.

- What are some of the sacrifices our family has made?
- Why did we make those sacrifices?
- Why is it important to understand Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross for our sins?
- What can we do in response to the sacrifice Jesus made for us?