

GENESIS

2018-19 Moody Family YMCA
Youth Sports Devotions

The dictionary defines a hero as someone who is admired for his or her achievements and qualities, and who has great courage. There have been many heroes, but the very first hero the world has ever known is Jesus Christ.

In this series of devotions, we're going to meet Olympic athletes and how each of them displays one of Jesus' characteristics in and through athletics. We'll also talk about how you can do that too! As a result, you'll be stronger and healthier spiritually, mentally, and physically. And that will make your family and your community stronger and healthier. And that's good for all of us!

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In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth – Genesis 1:1

LESSON 1: THE BEGINNING

Chalk Talk

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth – Genesis 1:1

The Bible is among many things, history. The Bible is the account of God’s activity in history – it is His-Story. And so, history must have a beginning. The first verse of the Bible gives the most sure and best knowledge of the beginning of the universe than all other writings. If you can believe **Genesis 1:1: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth**, you understand the beginning: **By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God’s command...Hebrews 11:3.**

God is the Creator. Nothing or no one created God. God was not just there in the beginning, He is the beginning: has always been: **I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end,” says the Lord God. I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One - Revelation 1:8.** If you don’t understand how God “got here” it’s ok. He doesn’t ask us to understand, just believe. That’s what faith is.

Practice Session

What are some of the things you do in practice?

Why do you think your coach has you do those things?

How do you think you or your team would do in a game if you didn’t do those things in practice?

Good Words to Remember

In the beginning God...Genesis 1:1



LESSON 2: GOD'S NAME

Chalk Talk

God replied to Moses, “I am who I am...” – Exodus 3:14.

Does God have a name? He does! God's name in the Hebrew language is “Yahweh.” Sometimes it's pronounced “Jehova” and it means “I AM.” When Moses asked God what His name is, God said: **I AM WHO I AM - Exodus 3:14** – then He sort of shortened it to: I AM. Kind of like a nick-name.

Did you know that your name has a meaning? Last year, the most popular name in the United states for girls was Sophia, and the most popular name for boys was John. There is not only a meaning behind your name - for example: Sophia means “wisdom,” and John means “God is gracious.” When people hear your name, we associate everything we know about you with it: your character, your qualities, and your reputation. Just by hearing your name we have a pretty good idea of who you are and what you are like. There's a lot going on behind your name.

And so it is with God. God has other names – kind of like titles – that tell us who He is. Here are some of them

- El-Elohim – All Powerful Creator
- El-Elyon – God Most High
- Jehova – Jireh – The Lord Provides
- El - Shaddai – God Almighty
- Jehova – Shalom – God is our peace

It makes sense that the God who created all things and sustains His creation has many names for us to know Him by.

Practice Session

Pick a name for your team. What would you want others to think of when they hear your team name?

Now think of your name. What would you like others to think of you when they hear your name? What ways can you think of to help you be a good teammate? Pick one and practice it this week.

Good Words to Remember

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty – Revelation 4:8



LESSON 3: CREATION

Chalk Talk

The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters – Genesis 1:2.

For most people, it would be impossible to make something out of nothing. A painter has to have paint or a canvass. A piano player has to have a piano to play music. A jeweler has to have jewels to work with. A swimmer has to have water (and a swimsuit). But God created everything out of nothing. If you're like me, this makes your brain hurt and we're not alone: **He does great things too marvelous to understand. He performs countless miracles – Job 5:9.** All we can do sometimes is sit back and praise God for who He is and what He has done.

In the beginning, the earth was chaos. The land and water were all mixed together. And if there was anything worth seeing, there was no light by which to see it. But out of this immense mass of chaos, everything in and on earth was produced. God not only made all things out of nothing, He created order out of disorder.

Practice Session

What would practice be like if it were disorganized and everybody did what they wanted whenever they wanted to do it?

What would make practice better or more useful?

Good Words to Remember

I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done – Psalm 9: 1



LESSON 4: LIGHT

Chalk Talk

Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light – Genesis 1:3.

On the first day of creation week God spoke light into existence. Light didn’t come from the sun or the stars because God had not yet created them. God made light first for a couple of reasons.

1) The Bible says God is light, so light resembles God. 2) If there was no light, you couldn’t see anything!

God separated or divided light and dark and called them day and night. God divided time between light and darkness, because we work by day and rest by night. But since both day and night belong to Him (since He created them), and whether we are at work or at rest, God wants us to think about what He says:

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. ² But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. ³ They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do – Psalm 1:1-3.

Practice Session

When God created light, things could be seen. Where can you see in your team and your teammates:

Variety _____
Beauty _____
Power _____
Order _____
Mystery _____

Good Words to Remember

God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all - 1 John 1:5



LESSON 5: SKY

Chalk Talk

God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens – Genesis 1:7.

The sky is more than just the atmosphere above and around the earth. It is also what we call outer space! It's where the sun and moon and the stars are placed - or if you prefer a more majestic title: the firmament of heaven.

The sky is a pretty cool place. We not only breathe its air, but things also move in and through the sky – the light from the sun, sounds, text messages, birds, planes, rockets, and - even angels! There's a lot going on in and up there!

Quick note: God created all things seen and unseen including something you may not be thinking about: He created love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness faithfulness, gentleness and self-control - He created truth – what's right and what's wrong – He created all of these things and gives them to us as gifts to live rightly.

Practice Session

The sky and all that we see in it reminds us of God's power. But God created things like love that are real but unseen until we see it in people's actions.

How can you show the gift of love to your teammates and others?

How can you show the gift of kindness to your teammates and others?

How can you show the gift of self-control to your teammates and to others?

Good Words to Remember

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, and self-control – Galatians 5:22-23



LESSON 6: LAND

Chalk-Talk

Then God said, “Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear.” And that is what happened. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground “land” and the waters “seas” – Genesis 1:9-10.

God gathered the waters together and made dry land appear. Two days earlier the earth was chaos with no form or shape – land and water were mixed together in one big swirling mass. But now, God separated the water and the land and made them both useful.

In obedience to God’s command, the dry land brought forth various food – grass and grains, fruits, vegetables, and herbs. God also made them seed bearing so that every growing tree, plant, and herb would last to provide food for animals and people - not just at the beginning of creation but for as long as they continue upon the earth. God is making the earth ready to give to man.

Practice Session

That God made trees and plants to renew their fruits and produce every year is an example of God’s goodness and provision for us. What kinds of gifts has God given you to provide help for your teammates and others? Pick one and put it into practice this week to help your team and others.

Good Words to Remember

O Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth! – Psalm 8:1



LESSON 7: NIGHT-LIGHTS

Chalk-Talk

Then God said, “Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, days, and years – Genesis 1:14.

On the fourth day of creation week God gave the command for lights to appear in the sky - “night-lights.” God created the sun, the moon, and the stars to serve Him and to serve us. The sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening to separate the day and night. As the earth revolves around the sun, it brings about the seasons and instructs farmers, and sailors, and those that depend on the seasons of when and how to work wisely.

God made the sun to govern the day and the moon to govern the night. The sun is the greatest of all the lights, not because of its size – there are larger – but because it is the most useful of all the lights for the earth. The moon, even though it is small and borrows its light from the sun, because of where God put it and what it does makes it more excellent than all the other lights.

Practice Session

The sun and moon teach us that the most valuable are those that are of the most service. Not those with the best gifts, but those that do the most good with their gifts. What are you good at doing? How can you use that gift and serve others on your team and others?

Good Words to Remember

Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant - Matthew 20:26.



LESSON 8: THINGS THAT FLY AND SWIM

Chalk-Talk

Then God said, “Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind” – Genesis 1:20

On the fifth day of creation week the earth was ready to support animal life. God had made water, soil, air, and plants and fruits for food. He had also created the sun to give light and warmth. Now God created Earth’s first inhabitants—the animals that live in the sea and those that fly in the air.

Have you ever thought about why God created so many different kinds of fish, and birds, and animals? God could have made just a few kinds of fish and birds and animals but it makes the world a more interesting place. For example, pick a bug or another animal. You could spend your whole life studying it and never discover everything there is to know about it. Another reason is that everything created by God tells us what He is like. When we look at the world around us we realize just how great and wise and wonderful God is.

Practice Session

God is creating each thing in a specific order leading up to his best creation: people! God is teaching us work toward perfection in all we do and that our last work should be our best work.

What kinds of drills or practice do you in practice to help you get ready for the game?

Now pick one and determine to do it to the very best of the ability you have.

How will this help your teammates and your coach?

Good Words to Remember

May all of creation lead us to the consider the wisdom, power, and goodness, of God who made all things, and move us to stand in awe of him, as the fish and the birds and the animals do of us – Matthew Henry.



LESSON 9: THE ANT AND THE ELEPHANT

Chalk-Talk

Then God said, “Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals.” And that is what happened – Genesis 1:24.

The sixth day of creation week. The day before the sea was filled with the fish and sea creatures, and the air was filled with birds. On this day God made all the animals that live on land – everything from ants to elephants. God made them all different. Not only in shapes and sizes but in their nature and all with their own personality. Some were made to be around the house, and others to be wild in the fields and forests. Some were made for service, and some were made for food. And all were made by God’s wisdom for what his people needed.

Bonus Question and Answer: OK – what about dinosaurs. Were they around when people were around? Yes! God made the dinosaurs on the sixth day along with the other land animals. Adam and Eve were also made on the sixth day. So dinosaurs lived at the same time as people.

Practice Session

Pick your favorite animal. What strengths and qualities does this animal have?

How can you put your favorite animal’s abilities into practice to help your teammates and others?

Good Words To Remember

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself – Luke 10:27



LESSON 10: YOU AND ME

Chalk-Talk

Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us – Genesis 1:26.

Of all of creation, people were made last. We are made humbled, honored, and favored. Humbled that we are over all of creation. Honored that creation advanced from less perfect to more so. Favored that earth was not fit for us until it was completely ready for us.

We can reason and choose. When you kick a ball or catch a pass you reflect God’s creativity. When you become angry and want to hurt someone but hold back; when you last touch the ball before it goes out of bounds and you tell the referee its out on you, you reflect God’s goodness.

When you help a teammate learn how to run a play or congratulate a player on the other team after he or she makes a good play, you reflect God in relationships.

When you choose to tell the truth rather than lie, when you choose to be on time rather than make the team wait on you, when you choose to listen to and obey your coach, in all these choices you are reflecting God’s right-ness.

Practice Session

God made us to be like Him – not perfect – but to reflect Him and His ways. Pick one (or more) of the choices below and decide how you can help your teammates and others by what you do:

Mentally: _____

Physically: _____

Morally: _____

Physically: _____

Good Words To Remember

Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do – Ephesians 5:1

