

Youth Sports Devotions Season 1

These first Eight Devotions are focusing on characteristics or fruits of a healthy person. Take grapes for example. A grapevine is made up of the vine – that big knotty woody thing. From the vine grow branches. And from the branches grow grapes. Healthy grapevines produce good grapes. Unhealthy grapevines produce bad grapes. We want you to produce good, healthy fruits in your life.

So each week you have practice your coach or team chaplain is going to talk to you about how to produce one good characteristic or fruit in your life, so you'll be stronger and healthier – as an athlete – and as a person.

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” – Galatians 5:22-23.

Practice Session 1: Love

Chalk Talk

This word for love doesn't refer to warm feelings but to a deliberate attitude of good will and devotion to others. It's a verb. A doing word. It's wanting and doing what's best for another. Love gives freely without looking at whether the other person deserves it, and it gives without expecting anything back. Love looks like helping a teammate or opponent up from the field or court. It looks like helping a teammate learn the plays. It looks like doing the right thing to help others.

Drills

- ⊗ What are ways you can you help your team in any capacity?
- ⊗ How will you do what's best for your teammates, coaches, referees, parents, volunteers this week?



Wrap-Up Prayer:

Lord, help us to give of ourselves for others, to do what's best for others, without expecting anything in return.

Family Prayer

Lord, let us love - give of ourselves for others. May we help the team in any capacity, whether he or she is in the starting lineup, or carrying equipment at the end of the game.

Practice Session 2: Joy

Chalk Talk

Joy is being able to rest in God's care even in the midst of difficult circumstances.

Joy is not happiness. Happiness depends on circumstances – if I score the winning goal or my team wins, then I'm happy. If I miss the shot at the end of the game and my team loses, or I get injured, then maybe I'm not so happy. That's a condition. Joy isn't like that. Joy is a state – it doesn't come or go. In fact, joy actually seems to show up best during hard times. How can you be joyful? Focus on the fact that God has a purpose for everything in your life, and you focus on the purpose rather than the circumstance.

Drills

- ⊗ How you can rest in any situation?
- ⊗ How will you practice resting in a situation that is difficult this week?



Wrap-Up Prayer:

Lord, help us to be joyful and know that You are in control of all circumstances. You have a better plan and the best outcome in any situation than the best plan we can see or know of.

Family Prayer

Lord, help us choose to be joyful and know that You are in control of all circumstances. You have a better plan and the best outcome in any situation than the best plan we or can see or know of.

Practice Session 3: Peace

Chalk Talk

Peace is a gift. It's the absence of strife or trouble and enjoying a sense of well-being and calm in the midst of what's going on around you. Let's say your team was penalized during a play when it appears that a penalty didn't occur – what might be your first instinct as a player? As a coach? As a parent? Peace will – vocabulary builder – transcend or rise above the turmoil. You can be tranquil even while in a situation of chaos. It is a sense of wholeness and completeness that is content knowing that God controls the events of the day.

Drills

- ✪ How you can have true peace?
- ✪ How will you practice having peace this week?



Wrap-Up Prayer:

Lord, give us Your peace. Allow us to be calm as we encounter situations that could cause anger or discord. Give us Your perspective on events or circumstances so we can make good decisions that will help us and not harm us or others.

Family Prayer

Lord, give us Your peace - to be calm as we deal with situations. Give us Your perspective so we can make good decisions that will help our family.

Practice Session 4: Patience

Chalk Talk

Patience is the ability to endure injury, irritation or injustice without complaining or retaliating even when you have the opportunity or power to do so. Other words that describe this patience are lenience, long-suffering, perseverance, and steadfastness. What happens when you have an injury and start playing too soon? Or what might happen if you're "open" and don't get the ball - maybe a little frustration which might lead to poor attitude? Or not taking time to look at a teammate who might be in a better position to take a better shot might lead to poor game decisions? Learning patience is a win-win for you, your teammates, and even the other team.

Drills

- ⊗ How can you develop patience as a teammate?
- ⊗ What can be a pre-emptive strategy or game plan for when difficult situations show up?
- ⊗ How will you practice being patient this week?



Wrap-Up Prayer:

God, help us to not be easily set-off when things go wrong or people irritate us. Help me to keep a godly perspective- to keep from complaining or retaliating even when I want to.

Family Prayer

Father, give us patience that allows us to be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Practice Session 5: Kindness

Chalk Talk

Kindness is being helpful, gentle and beneficial to others. When kindness is at work in your life, you look for ways to meet the needs of others. It is moral goodness that overflows. You're too busy serving others to focus on your own needs or desires or problems at the moment. Being kind results in a river of goodness that overflows into others' lives. It might even look like giving a teammate some of your PT – just because.

Drills

- ☯ Tell us about a good deed that you did for someone. How did you feel?
- ☯ Tell us about a good deed that someone did for you. How did you feel?
- ☯ How can you be kind to members of the opposing team?
- ☯ How will you practice kindness this week?



Wrap-Up Prayer:

Our God, please help us be kind when dealing with others. When we see someone who needs help with something, let a river of goodness overflow out of me to help out the best way we can.

Family Prayer

Our God, please give us kindness when dealing with others. Even if everyone around us is angry or upset, help us act in a way that will not lead others to act in a way that would hurt themselves or others.

Practice Session 6: Goodness

Chalk Talk

Genuine goodness is a concern for the well-being of another – and a good person will do what it takes to make sure it happens. Goodness reflects the character of God. Goodness in you desires to see goodness in others and is not beyond confronting or correcting for that to happen. If a teammate is starting to talk smack because a player on the other team is trash-talking, goodness says: play hard to win, and show respect even when you do not receive the same. Goodness says: do I reflect right living (sportsmanship) and do I want others to live that way as well enough to do something about it?

Drills

- ☪ How can you show concern for teammates and opponents alike/
- ☪ How will practice goodness this week/



Wrap-Up Prayer:

Lord, help us to reflect Your goodness, and help us to want others experience goodness in their own lives.

Family Prayer

Lord, let goodness fill us to help build unity, that we see others for who they really are rather than for just their outward appearance.

Practice Session 7: Faithfulness

Chalk Talk

Faithfulness is the choice to remain and support or encourage others through even the most difficult circumstances. If you are a faithful person, you are someone others can look to as an example, and someone who is truly devoted to others. You are reliable and others can trust you. Will you make every effort to get to practice and games? Will you give the same effort at the end of the season even if you haven't won a game? Will you be the same person to everyone or just the ones you like?

Drills

- ☪ How can you be supportive of your teammates and/or coach?
- ☪ How will you practice being faithful this week?



Wrap-Up Prayer:

Father, Help us to be reliable and trustworthy, and to remain supportive and encouraging even when it's tough to do so.

Family Prayer

Father, May faithfulness make her reliable, enabling other people to trust her. Help her to be faithful to You, to your words and your ways, as she walks with others.”

Practice Session 8: Gentleness

Chalk Talk

Many people mistakenly think that gentleness – or meekness - is being kind of weak. But those people are wrong. Meekness is not weakness. Gentleness is power under control. If you have a 2 inch putt, will you take out a driver and whack it 300 yards? You could – you have the club and power to do so – but you wouldn't - you would engage the putt with the appropriate address. Likewise, gentleness is not without power, it just chooses to defer to others. It forgives and corrects gently or with kindness. In fact, being gentle takes more strength than acting as a bull in a china shop.

Drills

- ⊗ How can you show gentleness in practice or games?
- ⊗ How will you practice being gentle this week?



Wrap-Up Prayer:

Lord, help us to show how strong your power is through us, so that others may know the strength we have to respond appropriately in any situation.

Family Prayer

Lord, let gentleness help us to look out for someone else's best interests, and to stand firm in the truth.

Practice Session 9: Self-Control

Chalk Talk

Controlling what we say and do can be hard. Our natural “want to” are often times against what God would have us do or say. We want to be in charge instead of God being in charge. Self-control is power focused in the right place. It is mastering and restraining passions, desires, or appetites to experience life’s best. Instead of staying up late the night before a game because you want to finish watching a movie, self-control says: go to bed so you’ll be at your best to help your team. Struggling with too much screen time? Self-control says: unplug and practice what will help you and your team improve.

Drills

- ☯ How can self-control help you and your team become better?
- ☯ How will you practice self-control this week/



Wrap-Up Prayer:

Father, help me to have self-control to make good decisions that can and will protect me from influences or making choices that will not be good for me or others. Help me to choose Your ways.

Family Prayer

Father, may self-control allow us to make good decisions that can help protect us from influences and bad decisions that could send us down a wrong path.

FAMILY PRAYERS

One of the benefits of competing in youth sports is it provides a great venue to build godly character in not only the kids, but in the coaches and parents as well.

Each week your athlete's coach or team chaplain will lead them through a short devotion. We want to encourage you to participate by praying for each child, your child's coach, and your child's teammates during the week. We believe if you as a family will commit to doing this, your family will be stronger and healthier, and the families of his or her teammates and coaches will be healthier. And healthier families helps build a healthier community.

Why not commit to your child that you will pray for these characteristics that are being discussed during practice to be evident throughout his or her athletic career? And while you're at it, pray that these characteristics or fruits will be evident in your and your family's lives.



☪ Week 1: Love

“Lord, let her love - give of herself for others. May she help her team in any capacity, whether she's in the starting lineup, or carrying equipment at the end of the game.”

☪ Week 2: Joy

“Lord, let him choose to be joyful and know that You are in control of all circumstances. You have a better plan and the best outcome in any situation than the best plan I or my child can see or know of.”

☪ Week 3: Peace

“Lord, give her Your peace. Allow her to be calm as she deals with situations. Give her Your perspective so she can make good decisions that will help her and not harm her.”

☪ Week 4: Patience

“Father, give him patience that allows him to be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.”

☪ Week 5: Kindness

“Our God, please give her kindness to help her be calm when dealing with others. Even if everyone around her is angry over a bad call, let her act in a way that will not lead others to act in a way that would harm themselves or others.”

☪ Week 6: Goodness

“Lord, let goodness allow him to help build team unity, to see teammates for who they really are rather than for just their outward physical abilities.

☪ Week 7: Faithfulness

“Father, May faithfulness make her reliable, enabling other people to trust her. Help her to be faithful to You, to your words and your ways, as she walks with others.”

☉ Week 8: Gentleness

“Lord, let gentleness help him to look out for someone else’s best interests, and help him to stand firm in the truth.”

☉ Week 9: Self-Control

“Father, may self-control allow her to make good decisions that can protect her from influences and decisions that could hurt her performance or her life.”