



GO SPORT

TRAINING SESSIONS



GOSPORT TRAINING SESSIONS

1st Edition

All sessions taken from the ReadySetGo Black Book and the Sports Stadium Kit found at:

www.ReadySetGO.world

This kit is given to you freely to help you make disciples for Christ in all nations in the world of sport and play. These materials have been written by hundreds of people from every continent.

Specific resources for those working with competitive and elite sportspeople can be found at:

www.sportsonline.training

NOT FOR RESALE

English Language Version

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TRAINING SESSIONS FOR LEADERS

These sessions are designed to be used with Christian sportspeople thinking about leading sports ministry in their local area.

These sessions can also be taken as part of an online course at:

sportsonline.training



The Heart of the Movement

In this session each person will experience and explore the heart of the sports movement and commit to find out more. It is meant to inspire, challenge and enthuse all participants.

The session is built around three ideas: **What** we do, **where** we do it, and **how** we do it. These help to clarify the heart of the movement.

1. What we do

We are a movement dedicated to "Making disciples in all nations for Christ in the world of sport and play." This means:

- We proclaim the Gospel because it is central to salvation and disciple making.
- We obey the Bible because it is the Word of God.
- We seek to make disciples who are disciple makers.

Matthew 28:18-20

2. Where we do it

We operate throughout the world of sport and play. Sport is everywhere; inside and outside the church, and in every city and community. Jesus' command is to go into **all** the world. Sport, as a universal language, enables us to be obedient to connect with *all* the world.

Matthew 28:18-20

3. How we do it

We serve. We work in teams. We partner. The task of making disciples of all nations is so huge it cannot be done by any one person, church or organization. It has to be a cooperative effort, empowered by God's Spirit, done with the attitudes that Christ demonstrated.

*Ephesians 4:1-3, Philippians 2:6-11, Romans 12:3-8,
John 17:20-23*

The Heart of the Movement Overview

This session may be done as one whole session of 120 minutes or be broken into 3 shorter sessions of about 40 minutes.

YOU WILL NEED: Bibles, Two sets of labels for sports ministry map, Two 10 meter ropes.

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

1. Welcome and session overview *(see notes)*

8 min

Hold breath for 30 seconds.

- How long could you do this for?

Hold breath again while running. Ask the same question. Do a 2-minute dance routine with music.

- Link: Explain that this session is about the heart of this sports movement. Make a link between our breathing and our heart function.

Introduce the team of presenters. Explain the goals and key elements of the session:

- What do we do?
- Where do we do it?
- How do we do it?

▶ **Video: The Heart of the movement**

WHAT WE DO

2. Explore discipleship

10 min

Work in pairs.

- How did you become a disciple of Jesus?

Work in groups of 4 people. Read Matthew 28:18-20 and discuss.

- What does this verse say about making disciples?
- How has this process happened over the 20 centuries since Jesus left earth?
- Think back to your testimony. (Look at 2 Timothy 2:2)

3. Knee tag game *(see notes)*

6 min

Play the game and then debrief.

- What did you notice when we played this game the second and third times?

4. Discipleship workgroups *(see notes)*

10 min

Show and explain the diagram about how discipleship is a journey. Workgroups are given a category of person. Each group discusses the needs of this person. What do they need to be able to grow as a disciple?

- Link: We need to be aware that people need to be supported differently at different stages of the discipleship journey. Proclaiming the Gospel and obedience to the Bible are always central.

5. Bible discovery

10 min

Look again at the key Bible passage Matthew 28:18-20.

- What does it say about proclamation of the Gospel and what is said about obedience?
- How are these connected with disciple making?

▶ **Video: What we do**

WHERE WE DO IT

6. Connection activity *(see notes)* **5 min**

Everyone needs to physically connect without moving from his or her position.

- What did it take for everyone to connect?

7. Bible teaching **8 min**

Work as a whole group and discuss "Go into ALL the world". Read Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47

- What words are common in all these verses? (ALL nations, all the world, all generations, all peoples)
- Who are some of the groups of people we miss in 'ALL'?
- To whom is Jesus addressing His 'Great Commission'? (*His disciples and to us as His disciples*)

8. Understand potential of sport **8 min**

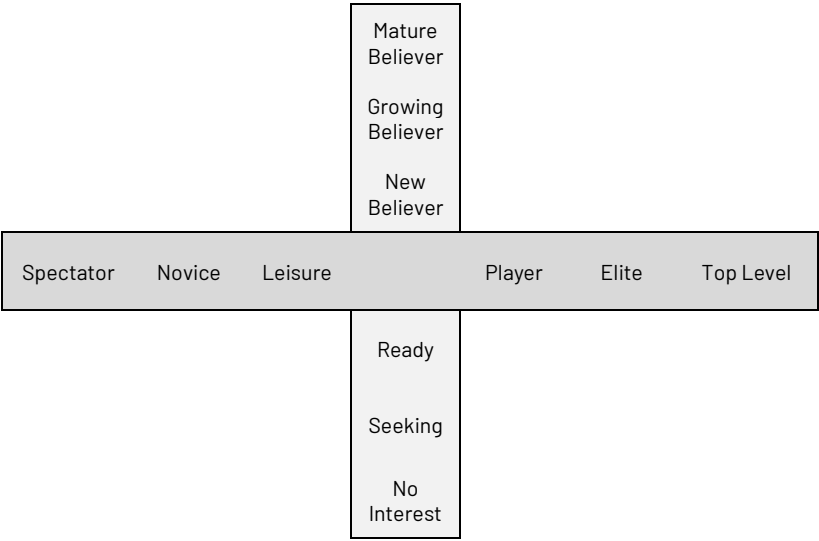
▶ **Video: The power of sport**

Work in groups of 4 people and discuss this quote.

'Sport is one of the most effective ways for every church to make disciples in every country and every community.'

9. Understanding sport *(see notes)* **15 min**

SPORTS MINISTRY MAP



Explain the sports continuum. This is the horizontal line of the Sports Ministry Map. (see detailed notes at the end of the session).

Activity: Ask people to stand in categories along a rope on the floor and ask them to explain the categories.

Debrief together.

- Are these people in every church?
- Are they living around every church and in every community?
- What does this mean for us today?

▶ **Video: Sports Ministry Map**

→ Link the Sports Ministry Map to making disciples.

▶ **Video: Where we do it**

HOW WE DO IT

10. Explain the scale of the task

5 min

Work as a whole group. Discuss.

- If we were setting up a business franchise in every country and city on earth, how would we do it? (There are 209 nations, more than 3000 cities of over 1 million, and more than 7000 languages)
- Link: It is a big task (when you consider all nations), it is labor intensive (when you consider making disciples is a long term process with a small number of people), and it is a very relational, personal and life-changing task. So what will it take?

11. Working as team activity *(see notes)*

10 min

Work as a whole group. Discuss then demonstrate together.

- How did Jesus do it?

Jesus modeled an approach very different from the world's ways.

- The world says you can do it alone. (Ask everyone to untie their shoe lace using just one finger. Then tie it up again.)
 - It will take us working with other team members who are skilled at working together. (Use 5 fingers on one hand to tie up your shoe lace.)
 - It will take us working in a team who are willing to partner and encourage partnering across a city, village or country. (Find a partner and use one hand each to work together to do up one of your shoe's laces)
 - It will take us working in a team who are willing to partner and encourage partnering across a city, village or country and who model Jesus' servant heart. (With a partner, go and do up another person's laces)

Debrief activity to identify servant leadership, partnering.

12. Bible meditation

10 min

Work alone. Meditate on these Scriptures.

*Ephesians 4:1-3, Philipians 2:6-11, Romans 12:3-8,
John 17:20-23*

Pair and share after 5 minutes.

- What key ideas describe how Jesus expects this task to be done?
- How might they be carried out today?

13. Explore sports ministry map (see notes)

15 min

Create or show sports ministry map using ropes on the floor in the shape of a large cross. Explore how people might serve different people on this map.

- How do the concepts of **service**, **teams** and **partnering** all connect?

▶ **Video: How we do it**

14. Conclusion

5 min

Personal reflection.

- What have you been challenged and excited about in this session?
- What will you do about this in the next day? Week?
- Who can you tell and be accountable to?

Pair up, then share and pray for each other.

Detailed session notes

1. Welcome and session overview

Ask people to hold their breath. After 30 seconds stop people and ask:

- How long could you do this for?

Hold breath again while running on the spot. After 30 seconds stop people and ask the same question.

Do a 2-minute energetic dance routine with music.

Explain that this session is about the heart of this sports movement. Draw link from breathing to heart.

Heart explanation:

The heart is at the very center of your body. It is foundational to your body and everything it does. The heart is always active and if it stops then your body dies.

In the same way, the sports ministry movement has a heart. This heart is at the very center of the movement. It is foundational to everything we think and do. It is key to how we measure success and make new plans. This session will explore the foundation of this worldwide movement by exploring and answering these three questions about its heart.

- **What** we do
- **Where** we do it
- **How** we do it

3. Knee tag game

Everybody stands facing a partner so they are about half a meter apart. The aim of the game is to get as many points as possible by tagging the unguarded knees of your partner in 20 sec.

Variations:

- Play again for 20 sec moving feet.
- Play again and tag any other person's knees as well as your partner's.

Purpose of game: To see that we need to look around us to find opportunities to make disciples. Opportunities can be anywhere, not just in front of us.

4. Discipling workgroups

Work in teams of 4 people. Give each team a different type of person to consider and make recommendations for the rest of the group.

Categories of spiritual state of people:

1. *No Interest*
2. *Seeking*

3. *Ready to believe*

4. *New believer*

5. *Believer in crisis*

6. *Mature believer*

- If each person on this journey needs different help, what help does each type of person need?
- How can we help people at each stage of this journey?

6. Connection activity

All people are spread around the room randomly. In 60 seconds everyone needs to physically connect without moving from their position.

Debrief the activity.

9. Understanding sport (Sports Ministry Map)

Ask people to stand in these categories and ask them to explain the categories.

Spectator: Spectators are those who watch sport as a pastime, a passive entertainment. They are not engaged physically in the sport, though they may be strongly attached emotionally and socially to the sport.

Novice: A Novice is a beginner in sport, no matter what age they are. It could be a five year-old trying to shoot a basketball or a middle-aged person trying to learn tennis for the first time

Leisure: A leisure player is someone who gets involved in a sport for recreation, for fitness or as an active pastime.

Player: On the other half of the continuum is the Player. A Player is involved in competitive sports. They have been on a higher level team and they self-identify as an athlete.

Elite: An Elite athlete has all the characteristics of the player, but they feel extra pressures from others and from themselves. They are distinguished from others on the team because of their higher level of play. When an Elite athlete's team wins, they are very aware of their involvement in the win. If their team loses they feel this personally. Even in a win, the Elite athlete could be discouraged if they themselves did not play well.

Top Level: A Top Level Competitor has all the characteristics of the Player and the Elite, but is also recognized for their sport. There is a loss of privacy. Where the Elite athletes will scrutinize themselves, the Top Level Competitors will have the added pressure of extra scrutiny by fans and the media.

11. Working as team activity

How did Jesus do it?

Jesus modeled an approach very different from the world's ways.

- The world says you can do it alone. (Ask everyone to untie their shoe lace using just one finger. Then tie it up again.) Debrief questions could be: Was this easy? Why?
- It will take us working with other team members who are skilled at working together. (Use 5 fingers on one hand to tie up your shoe lace.) Debrief questions could be: What makes your hand a good team compared to one finger? Was it easy? Why?
- It will take us working in a team who are willing to partner and encourage partnering across a city, village or country. (Find a partner and use one hand each to work together to do up one of your shoe's laces) Debrief questions could be: Was it easy working with another team? What made it easier?
- It will take us working in a team who are willing to partner and encourage partnering across a city, village or country and who model Jesus' heart of servanthood. (With a partner, go and do up another person's shoe laces) Debrief questions could be: Is servant hearted partnership easy? How do you feel?

Debrief to bring out servant leadership and partnering. People may notice differences because of the footwear people have (flip-flops, sandals, sports shoes etc.)

13. Explore sports ministry map

Create a sports ministry map. Use the two ropes to create a cross on the floor. Put these labels on the lines. The vertical dimension is the maturity of the believer (No Interest, Seeker, Ready to believe, New Believer, Believer in Crisis, and Mature Believer) and the horizontal line is the sports continuum (Spectator, Novice, Leisure, Player, Elite, Top Level).

Ask people to stand on the map in the place that best describe them.

- What do you notice about this?

Ask people to stand where a friend is situated on the map.

- Who can you best influence on this map?
- Pray for the person you are standing in for on the map.

Sharing the Vision

Explaining the vision in 30 seconds

People all over the world are committed to making disciples who can pass on their faith actively and genuinely. One place where there is the most potential to make disciples is in the world of sport and play. 5 billion people love it, play it and watch it. We just need to know how best to do it.

Question:

- Have you ever thought of sport as a way to make disciples?
- **Deeper questions:** What is your vision for making disciples? How do you see yourself achieving this?

Explaining in 3-10 minutes

Sit with a pastor or small group of leaders in a relaxed situation. Maybe have a coffee or even a meal together. Show them a resource that may be helpful. Many are designed for use on a mobile phone. Show a short video if you can.

Ready	Ready is the process of gathering and envisioning people. Sport and play offers unique and powerful opportunities for disciple making. Teams of servant hearted people can have a huge impact on their communities for the sake of the Gospel.
Set	Set prepares everyone to be disciple makers. All of us need to grow in the knowledge, skills and passion required to keep God's ways at the heart of disciple making. Sport and play contexts offer wonderful opportunities to develop disciple makers.
GO	Go gives us strategies to make disciples in the world of sport and play. Many simple and practical strategies have been developed in different contexts around the world. These strategies are freely shared and can be adapted for any circumstance.

Questions:

- What is your vision for making disciples and disciple makers?
- How could sport and play help you do this?

Explaining in 30-60 minutes

Use the Ready tools in this book to create a 30-60 minute vision session. Choose tools from the table below to create a program.

Remember: *Know who is in your audience and adjust the way you communicate accordingly. You may be talking to pastors, leaders, sportspeople, children and youth workers or business people and government officials.*

Simple Vision Sharing PROGRAM				
Pick one or two ideas from each section below.				
Link them together to create an interesting and engaging session:				
1. Share the Need and the Vision				
Tell your story	Share some	Show a	Do a Bible	Your idea

and why you are involved	statistics on the needs of your community	video	discovery discussion	
2. Share the Opportunity of Sport and Play				
Tell a story of what is happening in ReadySetGO	Power and Potential of Sport	Show a video	Sports Quiz	Your idea
3. Share ways to Get Started				
Share some stories of a few GO strategies	ReadySetGO Drama	Show a GO strategy video	Have a time to pray and plan	Your idea

Other Ideas for Sharing the Vision

- Invite people to see one of your GO sports activities to help them to be inspired to do one too.
- Organize a ReadySetGO gathering or a training.

Looking and Listening

Before starting a sports ministry in a new location, it is best to look, listen and understand the current situation in that place. It is important to understand the **people** and the **context** in the body of believers and in the wider community before any strategy is initiated. Five major questions help shape any GO strategy: **who, where, why, how and when?**

1. Understand the context

Do this exercise to identify the unique opportunities in your community to make disciples in the world of sport and play:

1. Bring a small group of interested leaders together to envision, pray and build a strategy.
2. Write up these 5 main questions on separate pages of a flip chart: who, where, why, how and when?
3. Spend 5 or 10 minutes discussing and collecting ideas for each question:
 - **Who?** - Who in our local community needs Christ? Who is under-represented?
 - **Where?** - Where do these people gather? Where could we connect with them?
 - **Why?** - Why would they want to meet with us? What is their perceived need?
 - **How?** - How can we best disciple them? How can they best engage with believers, the Bible, and prayer to grow as disciples.
 - **When?** - When is the best time to connect with them?

2. Plan a strategy

Now that the leaders have a clearer understanding of the people and the context, start using the Ready, Set and Go tools to shape the strategy with the local facilitation team.

- **Ready** is about getting a new Biblical perspective. Sport is mission and there is a vast harvest field waiting to be reached. What is our vision for making disciples in our context?
- **Set** prepares us with the heart focus, tools and skills we need to make disciples and disciple makers. (See the heart values.) What do we need to learn to be more effective as disciple makers in our context?
- **Go** gives us practical ideas about how we can make disciples in the world of sport. We have 3 basic choices about which GO strategy to use:
 - Use a GO strategy from ReadySetGO
 - Adapt a GO strategy for your context
 - Create a new GO strategy

Which strategies would work best in our context?

Regularly evaluate the GO strategies you are using and keep modifying them to have the best long-term success.

Who? *(Teens, high-level competitors, refugees, single mothers ...)*

In the church community

- What sportspeople are in the Church?
- Who has a passion for active disciple making?
- Which other organizations and groups can we partner with?

Outside the church community

- What sports groups are already in the community? (Teams, competitions, clubs)
- What groups of people are unreached and overlooked in the community?

Where? *(sports center, gym, field, park ...)*

In the church community

- What facilities does the church have?
- How could these facilities be used more effectively?

Outside the church community

- What sports facilities are in the community already?
- Where do sportspeople gather?
- Where does the community gather?

Why? (*Fatherlessness, boredom, skill development ...*)

In the church community

- What needs do the sports people in the church have?

Outside the church community

- What are the big issues of brokenness in the community?

How? (*Whole life coaching, Pray Play Say Together, Active learning, Preaching, Teaching, Testimony, Chaplaincy, Experiential learning, Conversation, Mentoring, Teachable moments, Role modelling, Family life, Story telling*)

In the church community

- How can believers grow as disciples and disciple makers?

Outside the church community

- What strategies will be most effective in disciple making?
- What strategies are you using?

When? (*holidays, weekends, summer, regular, morning, evening ...*)

In the church community

- When are volunteers available?

Outside the church community

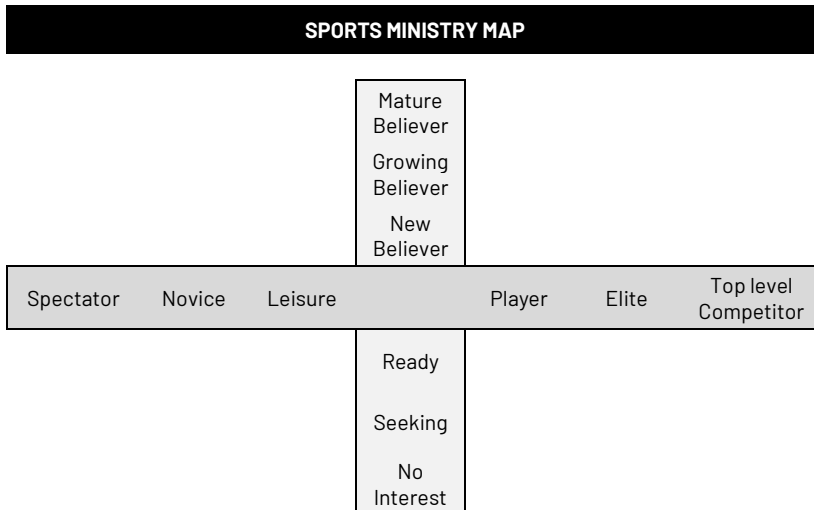
- When is the most strategic time to do this strategy?

The Sports Ministry Map

All people fit onto this map. People can find where they belong on the map as they assess the relationship between two parts of their lives: their faith journey and how they value sport.

This map can give people a clearer Christ-centered worldview. The map is useful because it is a helpful way for people to explore and understand their identity and how authentic mission can develop from a clear understanding of who they are.

The map



Vertical axis

This is the Engel scale which is a continuum showing the journey from no knowledge of God (-10) through to spiritual maturity as a believer (+10).

Horizontal axis

This is a continuum which identifies people's relationship to sport and how sport is valued in their lives. Those on the right side of the map have their identity in sport. This is primarily to do with mindset.

Sports Ministry Map Training

Session length: 90 minutes

YOU WILL NEED: PowerPoint or print out with sports ministry map.

SESSION OUTLINE

To understand and use the right side of the sports ministry map as a framework for developing GO strategies.

1. Introduction

3 min

Remind the trainees that they were introduced to the sports ministry map in READY. In this session they will look specifically at the right hand side of the map in order to help clarify the framework for moving to the GO strategies.

Pray for the session.

2. Explain the right side of the Sports Ministry Map

30 min

▶ Video: Sports ministry map

Watch video footage which captures a range of athletes from the right side of the sports ministry map. (YouTube has a number of short extracts of good sport which would work here.)

Explain Sports Ministry Map

Work as a whole group.

Show a diagram of the Sports Ministry map. This can be drawn or shown on a PowerPoint. The vertical dimension shows the Engel Scale which is a continuum of the journey from no knowledge of God (-10) through to spiritual maturity as a believer (+10).

Explain the horizontal axis. This shows the different reasons people value sport.

- **Spectator:** Spectators are those who watch sport as a pastime, a passive entertainment. They are not engaged physically in the sport, though they may be very attached emotionally.
- **Novice:** A Novice is a beginner in sport no matter what age. It could be a five year old trying to shoot a basketball or a middle-aged person trying to learn tennis for the first time.
- **Leisure:** A leisure player is someone who gets involved in a sport for recreation, for fitness or as an active pastime.
- **Player:** On the other half of the continuum is the Player. A Player is involved in competitive sports. They have been on a higher level team and they identify themselves as an athlete.
- **Elite:** An Elite athlete has all the characteristics of the player, but they feel extra pressures from others and from themselves. They are distinguished from others on the team because of their higher level of play. When an Elite athlete's team wins, they are very aware of their involvement in the win. If their team loses they feel this personally. Even in a win, the Elite athlete could be discouraged if they themselves did not play well.
- **Top level competitor:** A Top Level Competitor has all the characteristics of the Player and the Elite, but is also recognized for their sport. There is a loss of privacy. Where the Elite athletes will scrutinize themselves, the Top Level Competitors will have the added pressure of extra scrutiny by fans and the media.

Explain that those on the right side of the map (player, elite and high profile) have their identity in sport which is primarily to do with mindset. (A mindset is a set of firmly held attitudes.)

3. Small group discussion

Work in groups of 3 or 4 people. Discuss some of these questions to help explore the characteristics of those on the right side of the map.

- What do you think are some of the general characteristics of people who are found on the right side of the sports ministry map?

- What are some of the features that become increasingly significant as you move further to the right on the map?
- Who are the best people to minister to those on the right side the map? Try to give general principles as well as specific examples.
- Why would someone on the left side of the map not be the ideal person to minister to those on the right side of the map?

Take feedback as a whole group. Ensure that people are aware that those best suited to minister on the right side of the map are those who themselves fit on the right side of the ministry map. This is because they understand the challenges of playing sport as a serious sports player.

Make sure the following points about those on the right side of the ministry map are covered:

- They find their identity in the sports experience
- The sports community is a significant part of their life
- Self-image is connected to the way they perform more than whether or not they win
- They are willing to make sacrifices for the sake of the sports experience, e.g. family time or leisure time

It may help to give specific examples as you work through this section.

You may also want to highlight the following factors. A person further to the right of the sports map will:

- Live with an increasing risk of failure
- Take great risks to be able to play
- Find it increasingly difficult to know who their friends are
- Feel the stress of competing against teammates
- Lose privacy due to their celebrity status (many are idolized by fans)
- Become ritualistic in their behavior
- Live above societies' rules, with their bad behavior often accepted by society ("he took drugs because of the pressure he was under.")

4. Practical activity and application

60 min

Work in groups of 4 or 5 people and give each group this challenge.

- There are many opportunities to reach out to people who are on the right side of the sports ministry map in your community. You have 7 minutes to persuade the leadership of your church to support your idea. Work out what you will say and do with the leaders.

Allow groups 20-30 minutes to prepare. Then each group presents their response to the rest who act as church leaders. Keep each group to 7 minutes. Give a yellow card at 6 minutes and a red card at 7 minutes!

→ Link: It is essential that the groups don't default to running programs. Ministry on the right side of the map is characterized by the formation and development of relationships.

5. Conclusion and reflection

Summarize what the group has learnt during this session. This can be done in the form of questions and answers. Pray together.

Characteristics of a Healthy Sports Facilitation Team

Every sports facilitation team will look different to another as they seek to add people to their teams to serve the multiplication of ReadySetGO. Each team will seek to raise up people who have a passion to serve.

Teams often start with only one or two GO Strategies. As they grow in confidence, trust and skill they will move from a starting team to a growing team and aim to become a multiplying team.

A healthy sports facilitation team will have a desire to multiply and bear fruit from the start. If the leader begins by promoting a healthy team atmosphere then the disciple making work that the team does together will most likely be productive and honoring to God. Here are 7 keys.

A healthy team will be ...

- Faithful to the Scriptures and prayer
- Humble and servant hearted
- Willing to deal with obstacles and find creative solutions
- Able to respond positively when a training, strategy or reproduction doesn't work well
- Focused on long-term sustainable outcomes with churches
- Adding new people often with less experience or skill
- Encouraging and using many different talents and perspectives on the team

A city may have more than one sports facilitation team. In fact it is hoped that there will be many community teams in each city. Each team will probably have a different focus and will therefore use different GO strategies to make disciples for Christ. It is important that these teams meet periodically to share information, learn from each other and work on plans, especially when a sports event is important to all or most of the city.

A team will struggle when people ...

- Don't trust one another
- Avoid dealing with conflict
- Lead by control and not by facilitation
- Are not committed or do not feel ownership
- Are not accountable to one another
- Focus on themselves and not others
- Don't communicate clearly
- Don't create clear measurable goals and objectives

Mentors of Sports Facilitation Teams

It is helpful for sports facilitation teams to have a mentor. This person helps the members of the team to grow and also helps to guide and grow the team.

Teams can also be good to mentor other teams.

A mentor has three functions in this role:

- Mentoring by asking questions
- Teaching and training
- Coaching and reflecting what they see

The questions of a mentor flow through four areas:

Personal	taking an interest and knowing what is happening at a personal level.
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Awareness	knowing what is happening in the team.
Training	knowing what areas of understanding, character and skills to work on.
Highlight	in discussions, helping highlight one or two decisions or actions that are good to work on.

Further training ideas

Here are some other related training sessions found at readyssetgo.world

- We Work in teams
- Team Health Check
- How to Multiply Sports Facilitation Teams
- Developing Teams
- Mentoring
- Team Building Learning Activities
- Servant Leadership
- Healthy Partnering
- Conflict Resolution Principles

How to Multiply Sports Facilitation Teams

The goal is for each sports facilitation team to reproduce themselves so that we can reach every city and every community. Your team may need to serve many communities at the beginning. As your team trains new teams you can keep reducing the number of communities your team serves.

Here are the 4 dimensions to multiplication:

1	UP	focus on the spiritual growth of the team.
2	WIDE	focus on bringing a wide range of people into the team. Gender, race, gifts, age etc.
3	DEEP	focus on making disciple makers. Multiplication can be measured in generations of teams started from your team.
4	FORWARD	focus on starting teams in new places: the next village, city or country.

Here are some simple questions to discuss as a team to initiate multiplication.

- Which towns or cities are within one or two hours drive?
- Who on your team has a relationship with a person in sport?
- Is there a city or town with a pastor who is known to be passionate about sport?
- Is there a city or town with a pastor who is known for a desire to see churches work in partnership?

When you implement a GO strategy (camp, KidsGames or academy), invite an individual or group from another close city or town to observe and ask questions. If there is opportunity you can also include an informal vision casting for ReadySetGO or include an introductory SET training and deeper training in the relevant GO strategy.

Developing Teams

Further important training ideas

The introductory team training focused on a team needing oneness (unity) and also diversity. These two ideas work in tension to create a dynamic team. Developing teams will take us deeper into the Biblical foundation for teams, the difference between groups and teams, and how teams develop through stages. Team building activities are also included to challenge a group and provide opportunities to learn new lessons through debriefing.

1. Biblical basis for working in teams

God values teamwork so much that He has revealed it at every level of creation and even in Himself. Here are a number of reasons why we need to work in teams.

- **God** - Genesis 1:26 - God is a perfect team: The Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- **Disciples** - Luke 5:1-11 - Jesus chose and worked with a team of disciples.
- **Church** - 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 - The Church is described as a 'body', which is a team of the highest connectivity and quality. Individual members have complementary gifts and skills which make the whole body function well.
- **Practical** - Ecclesiastes 4:12 - Teamwork is practical for many reasons: strength, companionship, synergy and encouragement.

2. What is the difference between a group and a team?

A team is a group but a group may not necessarily be a team.

A group is made up of people who come together to work on a common task. A team takes this much further. Teams have complementary skills and are committed to each other and a common purpose. They are mutually accountable for their performance. Everyone is needed and valued.

There are many differences between a group and team. Here are some of them.

Criteria	Group	Team
Goals	Focus on individual goals	Focus on shared team goals
Skills	Random and varied skills	Complementary skills
Mentoring	Little thought is given to mentoring the next generation	The next generation is being prepared and encouraged all the time
Accountability	Individual accountability	Individual and mutual accountability
Trust	Members are uncertain of the motives of others in the group	High level of trust and commitment among the team members is essential
Ownership	Individuals own their ideas	The whole team owns and develops the ideas
Conflict	Conflict is not dealt with because of lack of trust and commitment	Conflict must be resolved and used to strengthen the team

A team grows, and the focus changes, as selflessness in its members grows.

Focus moves through these words: **me, them, us, Him (God).**

1. **Me - (individual)** It is often easier to do tasks alone. Many people are tempted to do this. Some cultures, especially Western cultures, have this embedded in their way of operating.

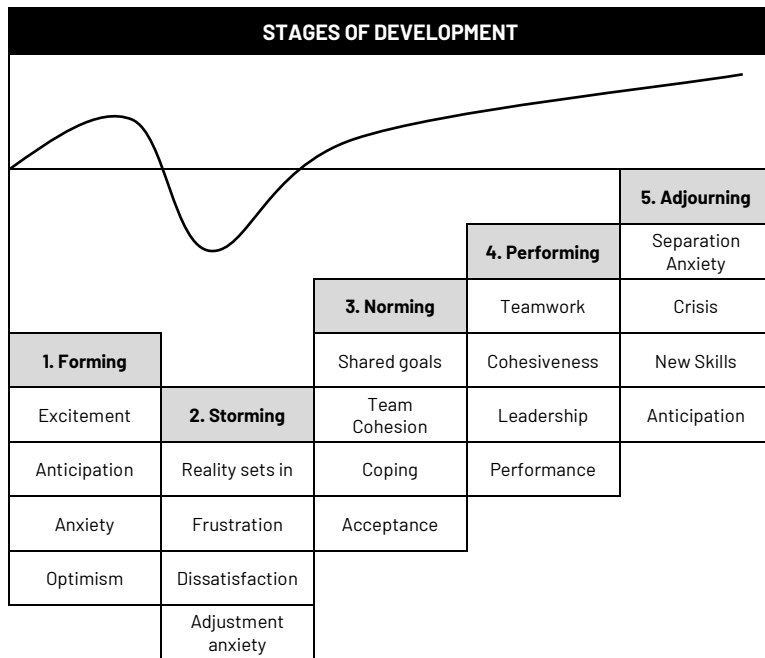
2. **Them - (group)** This is a collection of individuals who each have their own purposes for being together. They might combine efforts to get a task done for their own reasons.
3. **Us - (team)** We come together for a common goal. Each person gives up their own goals and shares the common goal. Everyone is needed and valued.
4. **Him - (high performance team)** This team is focused on God. They look outwards and inwards. They have learned to trust, resolve conflicts, commit, be accountable and get results for the Kingdom.

3. Stages of team development

A team takes time to develop. It begins with individuals focused on themselves and develops into a united and powerful force when the right atmosphere, leadership and challenge are present.

Bruce W. Tuckman (1965 and 1977) developed a helpful description of the stages that a team goes through in order to develop. These stages include forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning.

1. The **forming** stage represents a time where the group comes together to get started. It is characterized by anxiety and uncertainty. Members are cautious with their behavior and avoid conflict, controversy and personal opinions. The focus for group members during the forming stage is to become familiar with each other and their purpose. The leader needs to establish the culture of the team.
2. The **storming** stage is where conflict and competition are at their greatest because group members feel confident and begin to address some of the more important issues surrounding the group. During the storming phase, all members need to develop trust and realize that conflict is normal. It is an opportunity to grow to be a 'real' team.
3. The **norming** stage is a time where group members become a cohesive unit. Morale is high as group members actively acknowledge the talents, skills and experience that each member brings to the group. A sense of community is established, and the group remains focused on the group's purpose and goal. Effectiveness increases.
4. The **performing stage** is marked by high productivity. The overall objective of the group during the performing stage is to complete their mission and fulfill their purpose through goal achievement. Good leadership empowers each member to find their place and contribute fully for the benefit of all. There is an abundance of 'fruit' produced by the team.
5. This **adjourning** stage is used to wrap up activities of the group and provide a sense of closure to its members. This stage can be difficult for some, but members are encouraged to take what they learn from each group to aid future teams.



Further training ideas

Here are some other related training sessions found at readyssetgo.world

- We Work in teams
- Characteristics of a Healthy Sports Facilitation Team
- Team Health Check
- How to Multiply Sports Facilitation Teams
- Mentoring
- Team Building Learning Activities
- Servant Leadership
- Healthy Partnering
- Conflict Resolution Principles

Mentoring

Mentoring is a relationship that is intentional, goal orientated, for a season, with someone who can speak into another's life, in order to develop greater godliness in a skill or life stage.

Mentoring is...

Intentional

Consider carefully the relationship between the mentor and mentee. Both should be respected, see potential, and feel a connection between each other. Typically the mentor will approach a mentee but a mentee can also approach a potential mentor. However, once an agreement is made, it is usually better for the mentor to pursue the mentee to remind them of meetings and hold them accountable. This ensures the meetings happen with clear expectations.

Goal Orientated

Work out clear goals together. This requires honesty and transparency from the mentee and active listening, helpful questions, and discernment from the mentor. The goal could be the development of a leadership skill or assistance with a particular life stage.

For a season

Whilst we should have mentoring for life, the same mentor may not typically be for life! Agree together on the length of the mentoring relationship, and on the frequency and format for your meetings. For example, once a month, over a coffee, for one hour for the next six months.

With someone who can speak into another's life

The person should be the same gender, typically older, or at least in the next life stage. If the mentoring is based around a specific skill, the person could be of a similar age and mentoring of the opposite sex in a group situation may at times be appropriate. Mentoring is always best where there is humility and respect. Men, especially have great opportunity to learn honesty and transparency as both mentors and mentees. It is not about superiority or mere advice giving.

To become more godly

Ultimately, we want to honor Christ in all we are and do. Mentoring, especially in a life skill, is to be transparent from both sides. We want to be 'real' and not just 'right'. Both sides commit to pray into the situation and the mentor particularly sets a leading example beyond giving advice.

A lifelong view of mentoring

Consider a lifetime of mentoring. Have a number of mentors in your life. It is wise to have:

- **Someone ahead of you** – preparing you for the next life stage or level of skill.
- **Someone beside you** – walking in a common place and responsibility in life. They may be a peer in a similar life stage as you.
- **Someone following you** – whom you are mentoring. These mentees will push you along and help you reflect on your own life.

Mentoring is less about having one wise person to give you advice, and more about having a group of people who support each other intentionally.

What mentoring could look like

These are practical examples of what mentoring could look like depending on the context and needs.

Two people meet on a Skype call once a month for 12 months to discuss the mentee's development as a young father or mother. Action plans will be set during these one hour sessions and the mentor will send an email summary of the discussion following the call.

Two people meet for coffee every two weeks for 90 minutes for four months in the lead up to a major conference focusing on leadership skills which the mentee needs. At least one book will be read and discussed during this time.

Two people meet for half a day four times a year to do a personal 'whole life' audit. The mentor will provide a written summary with suggested reading, podcasts and further training.

The ideal mentor

An ideal mentor is someone who is mature, godly and has integrity.

Someone ready to mentor others will be:

Honest and transparent; willing to ask hard questions	Sees your potential, willing to take a risk and believe in you
A respected example of wisdom, with a wealth of resources	A good listener able to diagnose your needs and also glean input from you
Committed to you; has your best interests at heart	Practical, stimulating you to research and helping you to make decisions

The ideal mentee

An ideal mentee is someone who wants to grow in an area of their life and will allow someone else to help them.

Someone ready to be mentored will be:

Goal-driven and looking for challenges	Easy to trust and spend time with
Serious about learning and developing	Respectful of the mentor and is teachable
Transparent and takes responsibility for their own life	Someone in whose life the mentor wants to invest

Misconceptions about mentorship

Mentors need to be much older. No, mentors just need to be mature and trustworthy.

Mentors have to be perfect. No one is perfect but God. We are all pilgrims on a journey.

Mentors have all the answers. No this is impossible. It is always best when the mentee discovers important things for themselves.

Mentorship involves a curriculum. It may but often the important topics to discuss are found in the life experience of the mentee.

Mentorship is merely accountability. A mentor does many other things. A mentor points people to Jesus, listens actively and asks powerful questions.

What to talk about when you meet?

A mentor uses the current concerns and experiences of the mentee to set the agenda of the meetings.

Ask questions about:

- Urgent decisions on which you need another perspective
- Problems faced with setting your priorities
- What you have learned in regard to character development
- Personal blind spots, potholes and obstacles
- Plans and goals for the future
- Prayer requests

Dangers and advice

Experienced mentors have found these issues important!

- Do not mentor someone of the opposite gender.
- Do not get a mentor who is not a believer.
- You may mentor a non-believer however be aware of limitations.

Beware of:

- **Unrealistic expectations.** A mentor is not able to fix everything or know everything.
- **Disappointments in the relationship.** Sometimes it becomes clear that the mentoring relationship is viewed differently by both people. A mentee may lapse in commitment.
- **Control and manipulation.** The mentor must have integrity at all times.
- **Over-commitment.** The mentor needs to balance the mentoring commitment with all their other commitments.
- **Lack of transparency.** The mentee may not always be ready to share their deepest thoughts and problems with the mentor. Trust needs to build over time.
- **Money.** Be clear whether the mentoring relationship is based on a gift or whether money is expected to change hands. This should be clear from the beginning.
- **Lack of motivation.** The mentee may not feel they are progressing and may feel they are letting the mentor down. This may lower their motivation.

Mentoring principles

- **Ask very good questions.** Questions are very helpful. They are better than asking for or giving advice. The questions will vary depending on the nature of the mentoring relationship. Questions allow the mentee to discover things for themselves. This is a more powerful motivation for change.
- **Meet regularly.** Arrange at a time and place that is comfortable for both and encourages honesty without fear.
- **Walk the talk.** Model what you want to see; the mentor should take the lead.
- **Help the mentee make a plan.** Set goals that are specific, achievable, and measurable.

How to get started in mentoring

The following questions may help in your first meeting:

- What is your stage of life in work, family, ministry, leadership?
- What has brought you most life in the past year?
- What has drained you of life in the past year?
- How do you want to grow?
- What are your greatest challenges?
- What do you sense God has been saying to you about your life direction?
- Who are your decisions most affecting at the moment?

- Sometimes a personality test like the Enneagram profile may be a helpful tool to help a mentee understand themselves, their strengths and their weaknesses.

Helpful questions during mentoring

Questions and prayer are the most powerful tools the mentor possesses. Identify the key issues to be addressed and ask some good questions to explore the issues.

- Some helpful questions to use:
 - What has been going well for you since we last met?
 - What have been your greatest challenges since we last met?
 - How have you gone with the goals you set since we last met?
 - What is one thing that if you started doing now would make the greatest difference to your current situation?
 - Where will you get the resources to meet your need? Or who might know how to get that resource?
 - What are you repenting of since we last met?
 - What has God been speaking to you about since we last met?

Follow-up and accountability

Mutual accountability is the foundation of good mentoring.

These are important aspects to include in every session together.

- **Accountability.** It is helpful to have some record of the meeting with action plans that can be followed up each time.
- **Follow up.** Set 'homework' if this is helpful (book, podcast, habit)
- **Set the next meeting time** at the end of every meeting.

Further training ideas

Here are some other related training sessions.

- We Work in teams
- Characteristics of a Healthy Sports Facilitation Team
- Team Health Check
- How to Multiply Sports Facilitation Teams
- Developing Teams
- Team Building Learning Activities
- Servant Leadership
- Healthy Partnering
- Conflict Resolution Principles

Conflict Resolution Principles

It is inevitable that conflict will emerge as the movement grows.

We encourage that this be dealt with in love and relationship and with the guiding principles of the Bible. Here are some thoughts to help you start.

First read Ephesians 4:1-7 and humble ourselves before God.

A	Acknowledge that we need help and be open to the fact that you might be wrong	Allow God to open our eyes Allow ourselves to be wrong Allow others to show us our mistake
B	Believe that God can help and be patient and listen	Be confident (not defensive) Be sincere (not flippant) Be sensitive (not indifferent)
C	Continually depend on God for help and interpret through the lens of love	Consider others better than yourself Consider how God sees us Consider the bigger picture
D	Decide to make an effort to understand the conflicting issue	Decide to listen a lot Decide to dialogue Decide to change or apologize if needed
E	Ensure the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace	Embrace unity as essential - we are one body Embrace unity as precious, bought at a price - it's worth the effort
F	Fix your eyes on Christ and return to His calling for the common vision for partnering	Focus on what unites - love the Lord and love others Focus on what's required - go make disciples Focus on what's on the Father's heart - be His ambassadors in every arena

Work at keeping your relationships and trust strong at all times. This will greatly assist when the inevitable conflict does happen.

Further training ideas

Here are some other related training sessions.

- We Work in teams
- We partner
- Characteristics of a Healthy Sports Facilitation Team
- Team Health Check
- How to Multiply Sports Facilitation Teams
- Developing Teams
- Mentoring
- Team Building Learning Activities
- Servant Leadership
- Healthy Partnering

TRAINING SESSIONS FOR CHRISTIAN SPORTSPEOPLE

These sessions are designed to be used with Christian sportspeople and go alongside the Bible studies that can be found at *sportsonline.training*

These sessions can also be taken as part of an online course at *sportsonline.training*

You can find short videos which introduce each of these topics at *sportsonline.training*



Pray | Play | Say | Together

The Biblical Foundation for Taking the Gospel to the World of Sport

This session will help sportspeople connect their life of faith with their world of sport. **Pray | Play | Say | Together** is taken from Colossians 4:2-6. It gives a simple framework to understand how we can honor God in sport and play and use every opportunity to be on mission.

1. Pray

The first thing to do to connect sport and faith in our lives is to pray about it. In Colossians 4:2-4, Paul instructs us to devote ourselves to prayer. What do we pray for?

- To be watchful and thankful
- For an open door to our message
- That we might proclaim Christ clearly

2. Play

God wants us to bring all our lives before Him (Romans 12:1:2). This includes our work, our eating, our playing, and our relationships. On and off the sports field are places we can bring glory to God. In Colossians 4:5, Paul instructs us to be wise in how we treat outsiders and to make the most of every opportunity. We must be wise in how we play and make the most of all the opportunities we have. This will honor God.

3. Say

Pray and play will lead to say. We pray for opportunities and the ability to speak a clear message then we try to play wisely and generously. In Colossians 4:6, Paul encourages us to have 'conversations': conversations with our friends and with our opposition, conversations with the officials and spectators. A conversation is two-way and needs to be full of grace, seasoned and flavorful and appropriate to their questions and needs. It can be an opportunity for saying something about the good news of the Gospel of Jesus.

Pray | Play | Say | Together

60-80 Minute Training Session

Suggested resources needed: Bibles, Flipchart Paper and pens, PowerPoint, Videos available on the ReadySetGO website.

SESSION OUTLINE

▶ **Video Option: Pray | Play | Say | Together video (use at the beginning or the end of the session).**

PRAY

1. Explore the Bible - Colossians 4:2-6

5 min

Work in pairs. Share a story of your best sporting moment, or the best moment in sport you have ever seen.

Read Colossians 4:2-6.

2. Small group discussion**15 min**

Work in groups of 3 or 4. Discuss these questions.

- How many times is prayer mentioned in these verses in Colossians?
- What does Paul ask them to pray for?
- What does this mean for the way we pray for our unbelieving sports friends?

Take responses to the discussion questions and summarize.

As you take responses ensure you highlight the following:

- Paul makes reference to prayer in verses 2, 3 and 4. Prayer is a big priority for Paul.
- Paul identifies the need to be “devoted to prayer” and the focus of Paul’s prayer is for opportunities and boldness to proclaim the Gospel.
- We should pray specifically for opportunities to speak about Jesus and to explain the Gospel.

3. Share stories of praying for sports friends (see notes)**5 min**

Share stories that emphasize the significance of praying for one of our sporting friends to be saved. The facilitator or a trainee can contribute one.

An alternative story can be found in the detailed notes.

PLAY

4. Small group discussion of Play**15 min**

Explain that “Play” is the way we behave when we are performing our sport but also when we are amongst our sporting friends away from the sports arena.

Work in groups of 3 or 4. Discuss these questions.

- What does Paul say in these verses about how we should live and behave?
- What does it mean to act “wisely” towards outsiders?
- What does this mean for us as we play sport amongst unbelievers?

Take responses to the discussion questions and summarize.

As you take responses ensure that you highlight the following:

- Verse 5 says “Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders”. Outsiders are unbelievers, those not following Jesus.
- This refers to our behavior both on and off the sports field or playing arena.
- The way we perform our sport and the way we live amongst our friends can commend Christ to them. This creates opportunities for them to ask why we behave differently, why we live the way we do, treat people the way we do, and think and act the way we do.

5. Share stories of playing with sports friends (see notes)**5 min**

Share stories to emphasize that how we live and play amongst unbelievers influences their interest in faith and our opportunities to explain the Gospel and say something about Jesus.

An alternative story is offered in the detailed notes if required.

SAY

6. Small group discussion of Say**15 min**

Work in groups of 3 or 4. Discuss these questions.

- What does Paul say about proclaiming the Gospel in these verses?
- Why is it so important to proclaim the Gospel and speak about Jesus? Can you think of other Bible references to support your answer? (E.g. Romans 10:14-17).

Take responses to the discussion questions and summarize.

As you take responses ensure that you highlight the following:

- Verses 3, 4 and 6 are particularly important for answering this question.
- It is in the telling of the Gospel that we are most likely to feel uncomfortable, to come under opposition or even persecution. Yet if our friends are to respond in faith to Jesus, they must hear the Gospel message explained.

7. Stories of saying the Gospel to sports friends (see notes) 5 min

Share stories that emphasize the importance of hearing the Gospel explained in order to become a believer.

An alternative story is offered in the detailed notes if required.

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

8. Pair and share 8 min

In pairs discuss the following:

- **SAY:** How you heard the Gospel and who told you.
- **PLAY:** Whose behavior had the greatest influence on you becoming a follower of Christ?
- **PRAY:** Identify and pray for one or two of your sporting friends that you would like to see come to Christ and for your ongoing friendship with them.

Keep time to pray for your friends at the end.

9. Actions for Pray | Play | Say | Together 2 min

Demonstrate three actions: one each for pray, play and say.

Get the trainees to repeat the actions but ask them to replace your sport with the sport they play, when doing their play action.

10. Conclusion and reflection 5 min

Personal reflection time.

- What new things have you realized?
- What ways can you apply **Pray | Play | Say | Together** to your life?
- What will you do about this in the next day? Week?

Pray to conclude the session and encourage everyone to use **Pray | Play | Say | Together** .

Detailed session notes

Pray | Play | Say | Together

As you work through this session, you may decide you want to take feedback after each question rather than at the end of each section. Feel free to manage this as best suits you and your trainees.

3. Share story of praying for sports friends

Example story

A group of university students met weekly to pray for those in their teams who weren't followers of Christ. Three of the group played rugby and they regularly prayed for Simon, a talented rugby player. They invited Simon to attend a mission event, after which he started to read the Bible with a friend. In due course Simon did believe and then went on to pray, play and say with his rugby-playing friends.

5. Share story of playing with sports friends

Example story

Mary was a hockey player and joined a team where she met Elena. She noticed that Elena lived differently to the rest of the team. On the sports field, Elena would be as competitive as the rest of the team but she didn't lose her temper or blame others when things went wrong. Off the field, Elena showed genuine concern for Mary and interest in her. As a result Mary started asking Elena why she was different. Elena was able to explain the difference it made being a follower of Christ and in so doing was able to explain to Mary the good news of the Gospel. Mary went on to become a follower of Christ.

7. Stories of saying the Gospel to sports friends

Example story

Frank's family had always attended church but Frank couldn't see how it had anything to do with sport. Having left home to play elite football in his country, he was befriended by some believers who invited him to church, where he heard the Gospel explained for the first time. He knew one of his football team mates, Peter, was a follower of Christ, so he started asking Peter questions about how the Gospel was relevant to a football player. Over a period of months, Peter was able to answer Frank's many questions and in due course Frank became a follower of Christ as well. Having now retired from football, Frank spends time travelling to meet with football players and helps them to understand how the Gospel is relevant to them.

Further training ideas

Here are some other related training sessions found at readyssetgo.world

- How do we Live as Sportspeople who are Believers?
- Explaining the Gospel – 6 Windows
- Know your Role in Pointing Sportspeople to Jesus
- Read the Bible with a Sports Friend
- Share your Personal Story of Faith with a Sportsperson
- Helping a Sportsperson take the First Steps to Becoming a Believer



PRAY

Praying Effectively

This session considers the importance of praying for our sports friends. At times we can find ourselves not praying for various reasons. But when we consider that God is both powerful and intimate, that He wants all people to be saved from His judgment, and that there are unlimited ways to pray, we can find the motivation to pray.

What can prevent us from praying?

- We're too busy
- We don't know how
- We are unsure what to pray for or how to pray
- We don't believe an all-powerful God would listen to our prayer

Why pray? Because God is both powerful and intimate.

Jesus gave 'The Lord's Prayer' to help us to pray. In it God is described as both 'Father' and 'God in Heaven'. He is intimately related to us and also all-powerful. We can bring anything to God. He is interested in the details of our lives and we can bring small things to Him. He is also all-powerful, so we can bring the 'impossible' to Him too. We can tell Him our needs, feelings, concerns, joys, and worries.

What do we pray for? God wants all people to be saved.

1 Timothy 2:1-6 talks about praying for 'all people'. We are, therefore, to pray prayers of petition (asking prayers), intercession (asking Jesus to intervene in the lives of our sports friends) and thanksgiving. Intercession prayers can also ask God for opportunities to speak of the Gospel to sports friends.

How do I pray?

Paul 'urges' Timothy to pray, explaining that God 'wants all people to be saved'. It should be a regular activity.

There is no set pattern for how, when or what we should pray but it should be a priority. It deepens your relationship with God, your focus on Him, and is an opportunity for Him to speak to you.

Why not consider praying together in a small group? Why not use a prayer diary, lists of prayer points etc. Prayer is a gift from God and a powerful tool in our race with Him.

Praying effectively

60-70 minute session

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO US PRAYING FOR OUR SPORTS FRIENDS?

1. Discuss our reasons for not praying (see notes)

5 min

Work as a big group. Discuss:

- What reasons might we have for not praying?

Gather feedback on a flipchart.

→ Conclude: Once we understand who God is, we may find more motivation to commit to praying.

WHY PRAY? BECAUSE OF WHO GOD IS!

2. Challenge: List the names of God

5 min

Work in teams of 3 people. Give them 2 minutes to write down as many names for God as they can from the Bible. Then ask the question "Why do you think the Bible uses so many different names for God?"

3. Group work

10 min

→ Link: There are two main points to think about as we look at why we pray. It is because of who God is, and because of who I am.

Read Matthew 6:5-15 aloud in groups of 3 or 4 people.

Who God is:

Read Matthew 6:9 - Jesus is teaching His disciples to pray and refers to two aspects of God's character.

- What does each description teach us about God?
- How does this answer the question 'Why pray?'

→ Teach: Here we see He is an awesome and approachable God.

Who I am:

Read Matthew 6:11-12 - Jesus is teaching His disciples to pray and refers to two aspects of human character.

- What does each description teach us about ourselves?
- How does this answer the question: 'Why pray?'

→ Teach: Here we see we are dependent and sinful people.

Apply

In the same groups discuss this question:

- How do these truths affect our commitment to pray for our sports friends?

WHAT DO I PRAY FOR? FOR GOD'S AGENDA – GOD WANTS ALL PEOPLE TO BE SAVED.

4. Teach

2 min

Start this section by reminding participants that even though we are now looking at what we pray for, it doesn't mean we can view God as a genie to whom we just bring our list of requests.

It is helpful to remember that prayer can include:

- A - Adoration
- C- Confession
- T- Thanksgiving
- S- Supplication

However, when we do ask for things, the Bible does give us insight. Our focus here is on the specific question of what should I pray for my teammates who don't know Jesus.

5. Group Discussion *(see notes)*

8 min

Discuss:

- What are God's priorities for what we should pray for according to Matthew 6:9-10? (*God's name is to be hallowed/honored, God's kingdom is to come, God's will to be done.*)
- What should we be praying for our sports friends and the wider world of sport?

HOW DO I PRAY?

6. Teach about prayer

5 min

→ Link: The priority in this section is to make sure people have time to pray. There is a danger that this gets squeezed – don't let it!

Read 1 Timothy 2:1.

- What does this verse teach us about how we should pray? (*Urge/all people/thanksgiving*)

Work in pairs. Share prayer tips with each other. Share how you pray (*time of day/particular place/with or without the Bible/long or short prayers/on the go/out loud or silently etc.*)

- What methods can you use to remind you to pray for your sports friends?

→ Teach: There is no set pattern for the form our prayers should take. There are as many ways of praying as there are people in the world. We can pray on our own, in pairs, in groups. We can pray in a particular place or on the go. Our prayers can be planned or spontaneous, long or short, internalized or spoken aloud, our own words or those of someone else or Scripture. Some people find prayer diaries and prayer lists useful. Others find meditation and Scripture useful. Praying may not always come easily and it is something we need to practice. It is also something to which we are expected to commit. Prayer is for us to communicate with God. Use a prayer diary to help you to pray regularly. Weekly, focus on a club that you (and others) will commit to praying for throughout that week. Add named local sports clubs to any regular prayer meetings that you attend.

7. Pray

20 min

Work in teams of 3. Pray for:

- the wider sports world
- your sport
- your team
- your sports friends – name them

8. Summary

5 min

Summarize the main points of the session:

- What are the main barriers to praying for my sports friends? (*lack of time/faith/belief/misunderstanding of who God is and what's at stake/ misunderstanding of prayer; not sure what/how to pray etc*)
- Why pray? Because of who God is: God is intimate and powerful. And who we are: dependent on Him.
- What do we pray for? God wants all people to be saved so pray that He will save them.
- How do I pray? Regularly in whatever style suits you best.

Pray:

Thank God for the gift of prayer; for being both all-powerful and intimate. Ask God to help us commit to prayer and to have faith that God works through the prayers of the faithful.

Detailed session notes

1. Discuss our reasons for not praying

- I don't know how to pray
- I'm inexperienced so my prayers don't count
- I don't know my sports friends well enough to know what to pray for
- I'm too busy to pray for them
- I have prayed for them; nothing has changed
- I have prayed for them already – God doesn't need me to keep repeating my prayer
- I'm not sure if they would like me to be praying for them

5. Group discussion

- God's name is to be hallowed (Honored / revered / held in high esteem)
- God's kingdom is to come (God's rule to be established in people's hearts and lives. Believers living obediently under God's authority and non-believers coming under God's rule through repentance and faith)
- God's will to be done (We don't always know God's specific will, but we do know His ultimate will - God's Glory and our Godliness.)



PLAY

Why we love sport

60-70 minute session

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

1. Sharing stories

5 min

In pairs briefly share an example of a positive sports story. Gather feedback from a few.

Show the video 'Good Sport' or provide some magazine or newspaper articles of positive sports stories to give further examples.

▶ **Video: Good sport**

2. Brainstorm

5 min

As a whole group brainstorm the human qualities that are involved in these positive sports stories.

Write ideas on one side of a flipchart page.

(e.g. fair play, sportsmanship, respect, admitting fouls, acknowledging good play)

3. Bible discovery 1

25 min

Individually, read Genesis 1.

Task: Highlight key words and phrases that are repeated throughout the passage.

After 10 minutes find a partner and compare notes.

Feedback responses to the whole group and collect answers on the flipchart, recording only those words or phrases that are repeated more than twice, e.g. 'God' (most frequent) and 'good'.

→ Summarize: There are 3 big ideas in Genesis 1. God is the main character in this section, which is all about the creation of the world. Everything that God creates, without exception, is good. There was order in creation.

Bible Discovery 2

10 min

Work in groups of 3 people and read Genesis 1:26-28.

Task: Work out the big idea or key theme of this smaller section.

What repeated words did you see? - feedback to the whole group.

→ Teach: The key word is image - God made humanity in His own image.

4. Bible Discovery 3

10 min

Work in groups of 3 people. Ask half of the groups to do task 1 and half to do task 2.

Task 1: One person read Genesis 2:15-20; look for words that relate to using talents, working, or being creative.

Task 2: One person read Genesis 2:18-25; look for words that are about relationships.

5. Whole group discussion

10 min

Task 1 Response. Gather feedback and conclude: God made people creative, skillful, as workers.

All together: One person read aloud Genesis 1:1.

→ Summarize: God is creative and so are we, because we are in God's image.

Task 2 Response. Gather feedback and conclude: Human beings are created to be in relationship with others and not to be alone.

All together: One person read aloud Genesis 1:26-28.

→ Summarize: God is plural ("let us"). God is trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit are in relationship with one another. So, because we are made in His image, we are designed to be in relationship too.

6. Summary and reflection

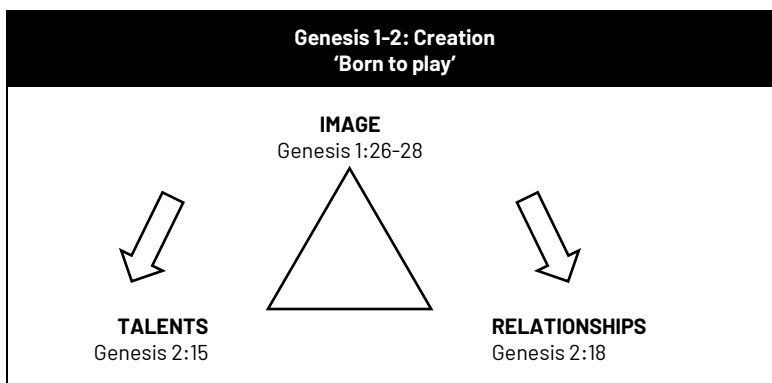
5 min

Show the flipchart of positive sport words.

Discuss (whole group) how each word relates to talent, relationships or both.

E.g. 'Fair play' shows respect for others - it is about how we relate to others; 'Sportsmanship' - involves appreciation of another's talent.

Show the diagram of the Genesis 1-2 triangle:



→ Explanation of diagram: The diagram shows what it means to be made in God's image. People were made to use their talents on their own, or in relationship with others, to glorify Him. The downwards arrows signify a purity in the way that the image of God was reflected in our talents and relationships before sin entered the world.

→ Summary: People were created with the capacity to be creative on their own and in collaboration with others. Sport is a way that we can reflect God's image, as we use our talents, in relationship with others, to glorify Him.

Pair and share:

- Why do you think glory-seeking is such a temptation for all sportspeople (including believers)?

Why sport isn't perfect

60-70 minute session

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

1. A cheating game

15 min

Two teams: Play any game that involves the teams competing against each other for a real prize.

The facilitator will officiate unfairly throughout, and the result will be that one team wins unfairly. (Do not reveal that the unfair officiating is deliberate!)

End the game once you have a clear 'winner' and award their prize.

Debrief each team.

- Did you enjoy the game?
- How does it feel to win/lose?
- How did you feel about the other team throughout?

Reveal that the facilitator was cheating.

→ Summarize: what does this exercise reveal about human nature, good or bad?

2. Share negative sports stories

5 min

Pair and share a story of a negative sporting experience.

Show the video below or provide newspaper or magazine articles that depict a negative sports experience.

▶ **Video: Bad sport**

3. Brainstorm

5 min

As one group, brainstorm aspects of human behavior in sport which are negative. Add these to the other side of the flipchart.

E.g. cheating, disorderly behavior, drug abuse, verbal abuse, match-fixing

4. Bible discovery (see notes)

20 min

In groups of 3, read Genesis 3. Give one task to half of the groups, and the second task to the rest. An optional handout is available.

Task 1: In Genesis 3 underline where you can see that talent, creativity or work has been spoilt.

Task 2: In Genesis 3 underline where you can see that relationships have been spoilt.

Responses to Bible discovery

Gather feedback from both groups and summarize.

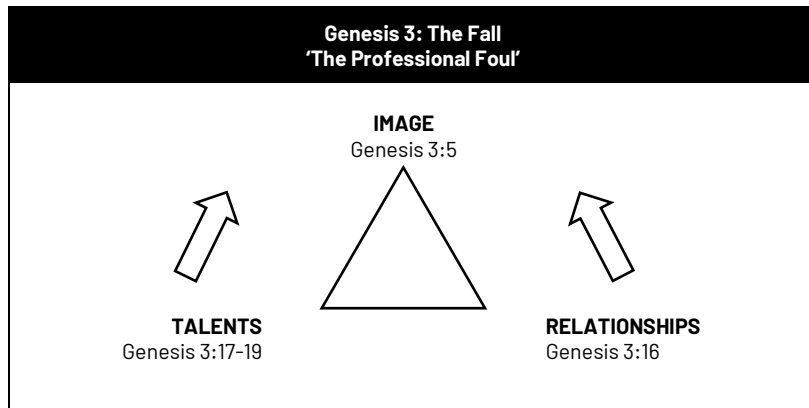
5. Summary and reflection

5 min

Look at the aspects of negative sport listed on the flipchart.

- How does each affect talent, relationships or both? (*e.g. drugs misuse will affect talent and relationships; verbal abuse will affect relationships etc ...*)

Show and explain the Genesis 3 triangle.



→ Explain: In a broken world, we use our God-given talents and relationships to serve ourselves, not God. This spoils relationships. This is why the arrows now point upwards. Genesis 3 shows that both talent and relationships are undermined and spoiled as a result of sin, which means that humanity no longer reflects God's image. In fact, people now try to use their talents and relationships for their own ends, to glorify themselves and not God.

6. Conclusion

5 min

Read aloud Genesis 3:22-24.

→ Explain: The consequence of their rebellion against God saw Adam and Eve banished from Eden and from His presence. All sin has a consequence – ultimately, it takes us away from God.

Read aloud Genesis 3:14-15.

→ Explain: God wants to help us to stay away from sin and wrong-doing.

Detailed session notes

4. Bible discovery responses

Talents spoiled:

v17- producing food will become hard work

v18- the ground will produce thorns and thistles, making it harder to work the land

v19- producing food will be done with sweat, i.e. hard work.

Relationships spoiled:

v10- the man now hiding from God

v12- the man blaming woman and God for his sin

v13- the woman blaming the serpent for her sin

v16- a consequence of sin is pain for women in child-bearing

The impact of Christ on sport

60-70 minute session

1. Tell your story

5 min

In pairs, share an example of where you did the right thing in a difficult situation within a sporting context.

2. Bible discovery - Romans 12

20 min

Work in groups of three. Read Romans 12.

Half the groups should take the first task, and the rest, the second task. An optional handout is available.

Task 1: Highlight any references to the use of gifts, talents or creativity.

Task 2: Highlight any references to relationships.

Responses to Bible discovery

Each group feedback their ideas.

e.g. *Attitude to talents:*

- v3 - Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought.
- v3 - Think of yourself with sober judgment.

e.g. *Relationships:*

- v9 - Love must be sincere.
- v10 - Be devoted to one another in love.

3. Small group discussion

20 min

Work in groups of three. Read Romans 12:1-2.

Discuss:

- What does "therefore in view of God's mercy" mean here?
- How is God's image restored to its rightful place in these verses? (Refer also to Genesis 1:26-28 and Genesis 3:1-6.)

Feedback responses.

→ Summarize: "Therefore" refers to the previous chapters which contain the fullest explanation of the Gospel message in any of Paul's letters, particularly chapters 1-8. "God's mercy" points to God's salvation in the lives of believers. Reflecting God's image is a 'spiritual act of worship' which occurs when we live our lives according to God's commands with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives within us. We can be intentional about worshipping God everywhere, all the time, in all that we do - including in sport.

4. Small group tasks

15 min

Work in groups of three. Each group take a different task.

Task 1: Read Romans 12:3-8. How is God putting right the use of our talents? (See also Genesis 1:26-28 and Genesis 2:15-17.)

Task 2: Read Romans 12:9-13. How are relationships being restored? Which relationships is Paul talking about here? (See also Genesis 1:26-28 and Genesis 2:18-24.)

Task 3: Read Romans 12:14-21. How are relationships being restored? Which relationships is Paul talking about here? (See also Genesis 1:26-28 and Genesis 2:18-24.)

Responses to tasks

Gather feedback from each group:

Task 1: These verses talk about a range of gifts given by God, adding new gifts to the gifts already given to us by His goodness in creating us. All gifts can now be used, by His power, to worship Him. This includes in sport!

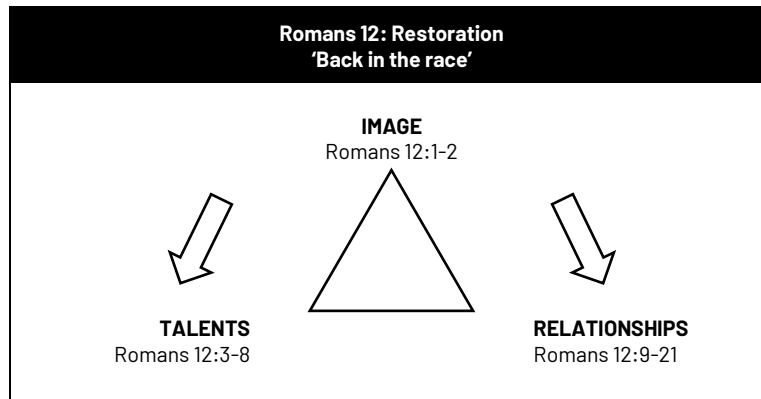
Task 2: These verses talk about our relationships with other believers as we are transformed by the Holy Spirit.

Task 3: These verses talk about our relationships with those who don't yet know Christ. It's possible that they may dislike us or feel apathy towards us.

5. Summary and reflection

5 min

Show Romans 12 triangle and explain.



→ Explain: The broken downward arrows represent the fact that, in Christ, the capacity to use our talents to serve God and others is being restored in all areas of our lives, including our talents and relationships in the world of sport.

6. Pray in pairs

5 min

Share with a partner one thing that has challenged you in this session – pray about this.



SAY

How to share the Christian message faithfully in sport

To be able to reach the world of sport for Christ, each believer in sport must be able to clearly explain the Good News of Jesus Christ. In Romans 1:16 Paul tells us that this Gospel is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. Later, in the same letter, he tells us that faith comes through hearing the Gospel. He reminds us: How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? (Romans 10:14-17).

It is our role is to make sure everyone has heard!

1. What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is good news. Jesus Christ came to Earth to die in order to take the punishment for the wrongdoings of the world. This saves humankind from the judgment it deserves.

There are 6 Big Ideas that explain the Gospel:

Creation, Sin, Judgment, Jesus' death (Cross), Jesus' Resurrection, and Our Response to this Good News.

2. How God's word explains the Gospel

This isn't a made-up framework; it is God-given and Biblical. Below are Bible references for each. The Bible is the ultimate authority.

- Creation - Revelation 4:11
- Sin - Romans 3:10-12
- Judgment - Hebrews 9:27
- Cross - 1 Peter 3:18
- Resurrection - 1 Peter 1:3
- Our response - John 3:36

3. How to share the Gospel in the world of sport

If we have a clear understanding of the Gospel, we will be able to apply it and share it in different situations. It is important to share the Gospel accurately, clearly and with love and compassion.

*A note on session structure: This module has 3 sessions of 75-90 minutes (60-Minute Plus Sessions), all entitled 'Explaining the Gospel'.

How to share the Christian message faithfully in sport: Part 1

This module has 3 sessions of 75-90 minutes.

Suggested resources needed: Bibles, Flipchart, Paper and pens

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

1. Write a summary of the Gospel

5 min

Work alone. Write a short description of the Gospel message in 30-60 words.

2. Small group discussion

15 min

Work in groups of 3-5.

Pool your ideas to create an agreed group definition of the Gospel. Share and discuss the merits of each definition.

Discuss:

- What do you now consider to be the essential and non-negotiable parts of the Gospel message?
Gather responses on a flipchart.

Feedback on discussions

Gather one response from each group. Then go around the groups in turn until all possible responses are covered.

The facilitator should write up the responses on the flipchart paper in the following way:

Group each response according to which of the six key doctrines it relates to (Creation, Fall, Judgment, Cross, Resurrection, Response) but do not put the headings on yet. i.e. as you get the responses from the group write as shown in the example below.

Your flipchart paper may look something like this once you have gathered the responses:

<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• God is sovereign• We are created by God• God created everything• In relationship with God• Perfect in the garden	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are all sinners• The world is damaged by sin• We are guilty• Rebellion• Sin is the problem	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heaven and hell• Punishment is death• Judgment• God is holy• Separation
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forgiveness• Jesus died on a cross• Jesus is the solution to sin• Perfect sacrifice• God's love and grace	<p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus wasn't defeated• Jesus rose again• Eternal Life• Filled with the Holy Spirit	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choice• New start• Repentance• Relationship with God• Following Jesus

→ Summarize: We have grouped the responses in a particular way on purpose. These 6 groupings represent 'windows' into the Gospel. Each window represents a key doctrine.

3. Small group discussion

10 min

Work in small groups.

Discuss:

- Identify each of the 6 doctrines from the groups of words on the flipchart – which 'window' is which doctrine?

Look at all the words on the flipchart – identify those that would need further explanation for someone who isn't a believer.

4. Find a title for each window

10 min

Work as a whole group.

Create a new title for each window using words that someone who isn't a believer would understand.

Some suggested titles:

<p>CREATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is sovereign • We are created by God • God created everything • In relationship with God • Perfect in the garden 	<p>SIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are all sinners • The world is damaged by sin • We are guilty • Rebellion • Sin is the problem 	<p>JUDGMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heaven and hell • Punishment is death • Judgment • God is holy • Separation
<p>CROSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgiveness • Jesus died on a cross • Jesus is the solution to sin • Perfect sacrifice • God's love and grace 	<p>RESURRECTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus wasn't defeated • Jesus rose again • Eternal Life • Filled with the Holy Spirit 	<p>CHOICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response • New start • Repentance • Relationship with God • Following Jesus

Here is the Gospel journey through all 6:

1. God creates the world. Humans are asked to run it under God's authority.
2. Humans rebel, choosing to run things their own way.
3. Humans continue to rebel and so God – because He is just – has to judge.
4. In His love, God sends Jesus to die on humankind's behalf.
5. In His power, God raises Jesus from the dead.
6. This presents us with a challenge to repent and believe.

5. Reflection and conclusion

10 min

Work in pairs.

Name and explain the 6 windows to one another without looking at the chart.

- What has impacted you most today?

Review the session and summarize the 6 windows again

How to share the Christian message faithfully in sport: Part 2

60 minutes plus session

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

HOW GOD'S WORD EXPLAINS THE GOSPEL

1. Find a Bible verse

15 min

Work in small groups. Each group should consider a different 'window'.

Look through the Bible and find as many verses as possible that relate to your given window.

Write these on a poster.

2. Feedback with the group

20 min

Work as a whole group.

Gather feedback and write verses on a flipchart. If trainees are finding this hard, give out the following verses on slips of paper and ask them to sort them out into windows as one big group.

<p>CREATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genesis 1:1 • Colossians 1:15-17 • Job 38:4-12 • Psalms 104:19-24 • Genesis 1:28-30 <p style="text-align: center;">Revelation 4:11</p>	<p>SIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genesis 6:5 • Colossians 1:21 • Romans 3:23 • Ecclesiastes 7:20 • Mark 8:38 • Romans 1:21,28-30 • Genesis 3:16-19 <p style="text-align: center;">Romans 3:10-12</p>	<p>JUDGMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 • Romans 6:23 • Mark 9:43 • Psalms 98:8-9 • Ecclesiastes 12:14 • Luke 12:2-3 • Genesis 18:25 <p style="text-align: center;">Hebrews 9:27</p>
<p>CROSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Peter 2:22,24 • Colossians 1:21 • Romans 3:21,25 • Luke 9:51 <p style="text-align: center;">1 Peter 3:18</p>	<p>RESURRECTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Corinthians 15:14 • Romans 4:25 • Acts 17:31 <p style="text-align: center;">1 Peter 1:3</p>	<p>CHOICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Corinthians 4 • Philippians 2:12 • Ezekiel 36:26-27 • John 3:16 <p style="text-align: center;">John 3:36</p>

Note: Be sensitive in correcting any verses that do not accurately summarize the doctrine.

Ask any other groups if they have other references to add.

Ask the first group to indicate their preferred verse for this window and why. Invite discussion of this.

Repeat this process for each window.

Conclude by highlighting the Bible verse you would most likely use to describe each window. These are in **bold**.

Emphasize the importance of *memorizing these verses*. There may be a little test later!

→ Link: The six windows and Bible verses act as a useful framework for ensuring we understand and can clearly explain the Gospel message to our unbelieving friends. We need to use simple, clear, uncomplicated language that everyone can understand.

3. Role play

20 min

Work in pairs.

Take turns at using the Bible verses to explain one Gospel window at a time to your partner. Imagine that a believer is talking to a non-believer.

Debrief in pairs:

Say two things you liked about the explanation and one aspect that could be improved.

4. Reflection and conclusion

5 min

Pair and share and then pray together.

- What has impacted you most in this session?
- What will you do about this in the next day? Week?

→ Summary: We need to practice sharing the Gospel. When we do so, it is important to include the six big ideas and memorize the related Bible references that explain them.

How to share the Christian message faithfully in sport: Part 3

60 minutes plus session

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

GOSPEL SCENARIOS

1. Sports scenarios role play

45 min

Work in pairs.

As a pair, choose a likely sport-related situation where you and a non-believer might end up chatting one-to-one (changing room, café, bus to training etc).

Label yourselves A and B where A is a believer and B is not. A has to explain the Gospel to B through any one of the 6 windows. Allow 5 minutes, then swap roles.

Each partner gives feedback on the other's performance on sharing the Gospel according to the following criteria:

- Content: Did the content refer to each of the six windows? Were any Biblical references given?
 - Clarity: Was the message of the Gospel simple and clear? Would an unbeliever be able to understand it?
 - Compassion: Were they listening to the other person? (1 Peter 3:15) Was their body language showing genuine interest in what the other person wanted to know? Did the believer know when to listen and when and how to end the conversation?
 - What was done well?
 - What could be improved upon?
- If there is time, a second scenario may be attempted, or even a third – use as many of the 'windows' as required.
- Debrief at the end of the task.
- What did you find easy about this task?
 - What did you find difficult?

2. Reflection and conclusion

10 min

- Summary: It is important to share the Gospel accurately, clearly and with love and compassion. We need to remind ourselves continually of the Gospel and practice it. If we are familiar with it, we can then apply it clearly in different situations.

Reflection questions.

- How can you get better at communicating the Gospel?
- What has impacted you most in this session?
- What will you do about this in the next day? Week?

Pray in small groups

5 min

For opportunities to explain the Gospel to unbelieving sports friends.

For courage to do this.

To remember what we have learned today.

USEFUL TECHNIQUES

DO versus DONE

Explain the following technique:

DO!

Many people think that Christianity is all about what they have to DO to get to Heaven; how restricting and boring! The moment I think I can reach God by what I DO is the moment I am greatly mistaken. In John 14:6 *Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth and the life. No-one comes to the father except through me."* But God cannot tolerate sin. What can I DO to avoid His judgment? Nothing.

DONE!

Jesus has DONE it! He has taken the punishment we deserve – just believe and accept it!

It is simple and profound.

It is a gift from God that is free for us, but it cost Jesus' life – so it is precious.

It has been DONE for us because God loves us.

"You are more wicked than you ever imagined, but more loved than you ever dreamed": Rico Tice

The Bridge

The Bridge is a diagram for sharing the good news.

POINT ONE:

1. In the beginning, God made the world and humans. People and God were in perfect relationship.

Humans

God



POINT TWO:

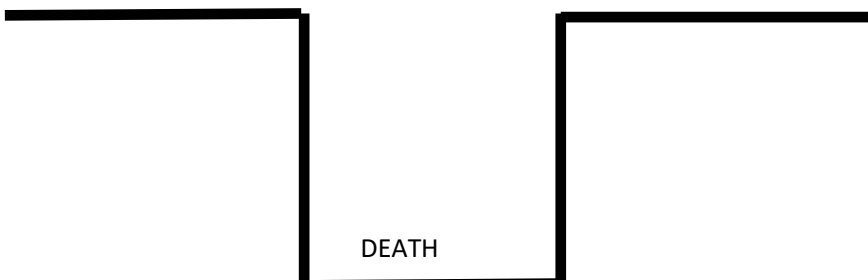
2. Adam and Eve, the first humans, disobeyed God and so ruined the perfect harmony of their relationship with Him.

3. Humankind inherited this disobedience (sin) from Adam and Eve. There is nothing people can do to bridge the gap!

4. God is perfect and cannot tolerate sin. The punishment for sin under God's perfect judgment is death.

Humans

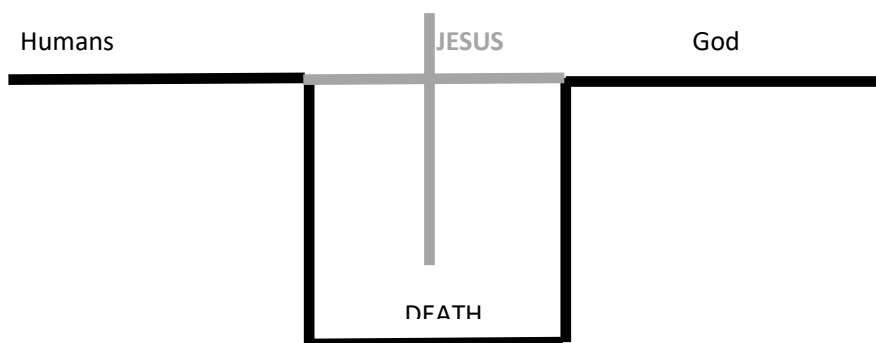
God



POINT THREE:

5. To save people from His own judgment, God sent Jesus to Earth. He lived a perfect life and died on the cross on behalf of humankind taking the punishment for their sins.

6. So, Jesus bridged the gap between people and God, restoring the relationship forever for those who choose to accept and believe.



What is our role in sharing the Christian message?

The command to 'go and make disciples' can be daunting. But if we understand God's role and our role properly, we will be better equipped. We are to leave Him in charge of the results. Otherwise the weight of responsibility could crush our own spirit or lead us to become proud.

God is in control of this mission

God is sovereign and in control of this mission (2 Corinthians 4:1,6).

Only God (as Creator) is powerful enough to open blind eyes (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Key phrase: "It takes the same power to create the universe as it does to create new spiritual life!" This power is God's.

We are called to be faithful

- Set forth the truth of the Gospel plainly (2 Corinthians 4:2)
- Don't distort God's word (2 Corinthians 4:1)
- Present Christ as Lord (2 Corinthians 4:5)
- Don't make it about you!

Key phrase: "We preach Christ; God opens blind eyes!"

We will feel weak and inadequate in this mission

Weakness is not just incidental, it is essential (2 Corinthians 4:7,12)

Key phrase: "The very thing we think excludes us from mission (weakness) is the very thing God uses in mission!"

So do not lose heart when it is difficult, but rejoice that God is at work (2 Corinthians 4:1,8,11)

Summary - 2 Corinthians 4

When we realize that God is in control of this mission, not us, it's a great relief! He gives us a part in the mission - what a gift! (verse 1) He gives us the Gospel - what grace! (verse 2) He sustains us in our weakness - what reassurance! (verse 7) He opens blind eyes - what confidence! (verse 6). So, do not lose heart when you feel weak. Be faithful and tell others about Christ!

 TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

1. Introduction**2 min**

Having grasped the 'why' of sports mission we need to ask 'how' are we to reach the world of sport for Christ? Confusion in this area can lead to us pursuing the right goal but in the wrong way.

- What is God's role and what is our role?
- Are there specific ways that God wants us to achieve this mission or is any way okay?

2. Activity: roles and responsibilities**10 min**

Play a group activity that involves clear roles to accomplish a task. Show that if we get our roles and responsibilities wrong then the task can't be accomplished as effectively.

→ Teaching point: Many believers 'lose heart' or 'distort' the message of salvation because they misunderstand God's role and our role.

3. Bible discovery: 2 Corinthians 4**15 min**

Work in groups of 4 people.

Read 2 Corinthians 4 and fill in the table below:

Who?	Role?	Implications
The God of this world	(verse 4)	(verse 4)
God	(verse 6)	Us!
Us	(verse 5)	(verse 2)

Discuss:

- God says 'let light shine out of darkness' (v6). Think of examples in the Bible where God's light shines into darkness or where darkness is turned to light by God's power.
- What do you think it means for us not to preach 'ourselves' (v5)?

4. Discussion about evangelism**10 min**

In groups discuss:

- What might stop you from evangelizing?

Write on a flipchart two headings 'competence' and 'conviction'. Gather feedback from the discussion and put responses under the relevant heading.

Summarize that both of these areas illustrate our weakness.

→ Explain that we often make evangelism about us (our competence and convictions), but this is exactly what we said in the previous section we would not do! (We preach, but God opens blind eyes!)

Read aloud 2 Corinthians 4:7-12 and discuss.

→ Teach: God puts treasure in jars of clay. Corinth was famous for having thin clay so when it was fired in the kiln it would crack. The cracked pots were used as candle holders because the cracks were crucial in letting the light shine out. The cracks are crucial – just as our weaknesses are crucial to God using us to let His light shine out.

Key phrase: "The very thing we think excludes us from mission (our own weakness) is the very thing God uses in mission!"

In groups discuss:

- How do you feel about God wanting your 'availability' rather than your 'ability'?
- When you feel weak, what truths can you remind yourself of to encourage yourself in evangelism?

Reading the Bible with a sports friend

Why read the Bible with a sportsperson?

The Bible is the believer's primary tool in reaching the world. God's Word is powerful. 2 Timothy 3:14-17 tells us that it is God-breathed. Our best thoughts, ideas, opinions or arguments, though useful, are still only human. They cannot compare to God's in power or influence. The Bible's authority is as relevant today as it has ever been.

Why meet with a sportsperson one-to-one?

When answering this question there are two main reasons to explore:

Gathering with believers in our society is not the norm and is often shunned. While some sportspeople are unlikely to go to an organized gathering of believers, they may eagerly engage with us and take a genuine interest in faith, spirituality and the person of Christ.

Focusing with a sports friend on a passage from the Bible in a relaxed setting where they can engage personally with the text and with your experience of Christ can be more significant to them than an evangelistic service.

How to meet with a sportsperson one-to-one

Practicalities:

- Where?
- When?
- Who?
- Prayer?
- Print out versus an actual Bible?

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

WHY READ THE BIBLE WITH A SPORTSPERSON?

1. Watch and discuss examples

10 min

▶ VIDEO: Video montage of people's stories of reading the Bible with a friend.

- 1. Believers who have read the Bible with a sports friend
- 2. Friends who have read the Bible with a believing sports friend – professing and not professing
- 3. Those who've tried it and found it hard or it hasn't gone well

Discuss in small groups and feedback:

- What are your reflections from the video? If no video, then ask someone to share a personal experience.
- Why have you come to this session? What do you think and feel when you think about reading the Bible with a sports person?
- Have you done this before? Acknowledge that some won't have and that is fine!

2. Bible discovery - 2 Timothy 3:14-17

10 min

→ Context of 2 Timothy: It is a letter written by Paul to Timothy, a younger leader from Ephesus.

Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17 in twos or threes and discuss your initial reflections on it.

Discuss:

- What do the verses tell us about the Scriptures?
- What do you think these verses tell us about the potential impact of Scripture on our sports friends?
- How does knowing this make you feel about reading the Bible with a sports friend?

→ Summarize: Scripture is powerful to bring people to salvation through the work of the Holy Spirit, and to continue to teach and train the believer in how to follow Jesus. Meeting for a coffee before training or for food after a game might be a more natural way to engage with the Bible.

3. Reflect in pairs

7 min

Imagine you're going back to your own sports club where there is another believer who can't see the point in trying to read the Bible with sportspeople. Pair up with someone else in the group and practice what you might say to them.

WHY MEET WITH A SPORTSPERSON ONE-TO-ONE?

4. Brainstorm in groups

5 min

→ Link: Often we are told something is a 'good' thing to do but we lack motivation to do it because we don't really know WHY it is important or effective.

Stand in groups of 4 or 5. Give each group a piece of flipchart paper.

Brainstorm as many reasons as you can for meeting with a sportsperson one-to-one. (*Get them thinking about the culture around us, the nature of one-to-one and the views of faith that surround us in sport.*)

While still standing, capture key elements of feedback collecting ideas from the whole group.

5. Teach about meeting 'one on one'

3 min

→ Explain: There are two reasons why meeting one to one is effective:

- We live in a culture where gathering with believers is not the norm and is often shunned by sportspeople.
- A short and thoughtful study of a passage of the Bible can have a far greater impact and is far more able to address specific questions and circumstances than inviting sportspeople to a gathering of believers.

6. Role play

5 min

Practice asking our sports friend to read the Bible with us:

- How do we do this naturally?

Set up stations around the room to simulate different sporting contexts and instruct trainees to sit or walk in pairs, with one responsible for inviting their partner to read the Bible together.

Keep stopping to receive feedback, coach and to swap trainees between scenarios and partners.

HOW TO MEET WITH A SPORTSPERSON ONE-TO-ONE

→ Link: Having thought about 'Why the Bible?' and 'Why meet one-to-one' let's think now about some of the practicalities in doing this.

7. Group brainstorm (*see notes*)

15 min

Place sheets of paper around the room each with a word written on it. Each word will be a workstation.

- Where?
- When?
- Who?
- How often?
- What material at what point?
- Prayer?
- Print-out versus an actual Bible?
- Gender?

Give the group 8 sticky notes each and ask them to move around the room thinking about the answers to each sign. Ask them to write their thoughts or top tips for each on a sticky note and stick it to the sheet.

Review

After ten minutes stop the group and move together around the sheets highlighting some of their comments and drawing out together best practice for each sheet.

8. Next steps

5 min

Work alone.

Spend some time writing down responses to:

- What will you do from here? Who could you ask to read the Bible with you?
- Who can hold you to account for the things you've just written down?
- How can I encourage any other believers in my club to do this?
- What opportunities are coming up that I can pray about and plan towards? *training camps, tours, etc.*

Detailed session notes

7. Group brainstorm

Review ideas

Where? Choose a place that is comfortable and normal for you *both* but doesn't have too many distractions. A coffee shop, pub, clubhouse or outside, or at one of your homes. These are all great places.

When? Pick a time that you can both make regularly and give it a *start* and a *finish* time. An hour in total is probably plenty, giving time to chat at both the start and end, and half an hour looking at the Bible. It is helpful to stick to this time frame. We may get very excited when someone shows an interest in Jesus (rightly so!), but we can allow this excitement to intimidate our friend by going on and on! However, there may be times when the conversation is constructive and worthwhile, and it is appropriate to stay longer.

Who? Someone who is interested in spiritual things, our faith, or Jesus. If someone has shown an interest in your faith, it is always worth asking if they would like to find out who Jesus is. They can say no, and even if they refuse, they will often feel complimented by being asked.

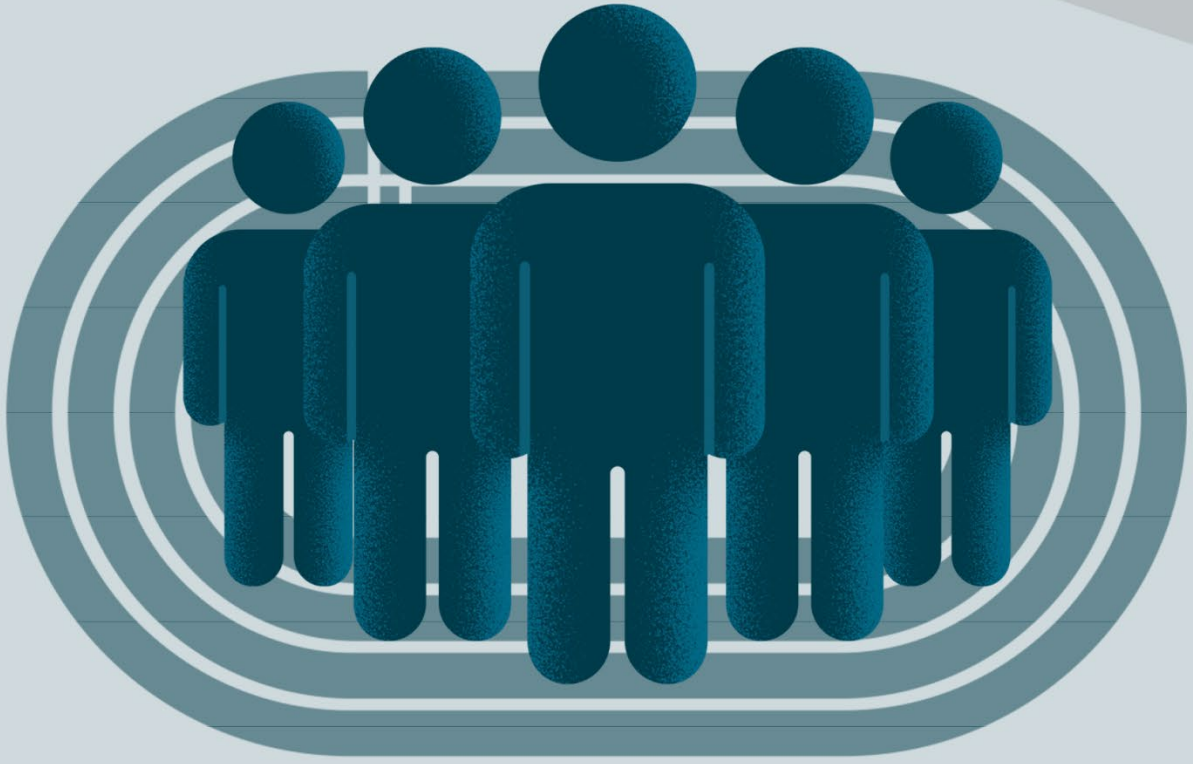
How often? You want the studies to be regular. Suggest you meet for a period of time, a month or a term - a relatively short length of time so neither of you feel constrained or awkward that this is going to last forever.

What material when? In the skill session 'How to understand the Bible faithfully' we learn the core principles that can be used on any passage. Using these in Mark's Gospel is a good place to start. Alternatively, there are many useful study guides.

Prayer: Often studies begin very informally, which is great and to be encouraged. If this is the case, a prayer may be inappropriate. However, it can be good to say a short prayer at the start of the study and perhaps even at the end. Something simple and short. You need to judge what is appropriate for your sports friend and the venue where you meet.

Print out versus an actual Bible? Remember we want to make the passages as accessible for sportspeople as possible - using a big fat Bible can be a little intimidating! Buy a couple of pocket size editions and both use these together or make a couple of photocopies of the passage and each have a sheet of paper. Alternatively use a Bible app, send them a pdf to bring up on their phone or WhatsApp the passage to them.

Gender: It's sensible to avoid meeting one-to-one with someone of the opposite sex. If unavoidable, ask if you can invite another person.



TOGETHER

The role of church in the life of a sportsperson

Believers have a variety of views on Sunday sports. Ultimately this is a conscience-issue for each sportsperson. Romans 14:1-5 encourages us to take a sound, considered position and stresses the importance of accepting each other's views. Three Biblical principles:

Created to Rest

In Genesis 2:2-3 God blesses one day a week making it a day of rest for all humanity. Hebrews 4:8-16 and Mathew 11:29 tell us that the Sabbath is a time of 'resting in Christ'. We all need a day of rest (a Sabbath) but the Bible does not prescribe this to be on the day we call 'Sunday'. Rest is not just a stopping from work for 24 hours. It's a time to focus on God.

Born to Worship

Romans 12:1 says we are to 'offer our bodies as living sacrifices'. In all we do, using the gifts God has given us (including sport), we are to give back to Him continually.

Made to Meet

Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us that we need to meet together for 'spurring one another on' and 'encouraging one another'.

Conclusion

Practical applications:

- If you choose to play sport on a Sunday, you will need to ensure you are meeting with fellow believers at another time.
- If you decide to attend church over sport on a Sunday, you will need to consider how to retain friendships with those in your team if you don't see them on a Sunday.
- Whichever you choose, it can be helpful to speak to your church leader, to see if they can suggest ways to help you find the balance.

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

1. Introduction

2 min

In this session, we will:

- Give some Biblical principles to help you make your own decision on this issue.
- Help you think through how you would explain your position to a sports friend who has asked.
- Give you space to talk, think and pray about it.

2. The Sunday sport spectrum (see notes)

5 min

Ask people to stand on the spectrum in the place where they would mostly put themselves. (Not play sport on Sunday or free to play.) Ask them to speak to the person next to them about why they put themselves where they did.

Then ask the people at each extreme to explain why they are where they are and what they think about those at the other end.

This will highlight the different issues at hand when dealing with this question and the strength of feeling in the room.

3. Deconstructing the issue

5 min

In groups of three discuss:

- What really struck you about the different positions people took?
- What principles were at play in shaping their decisions?

→ Link: This is an issue about which there are different perspectives and sometimes tension. It is also an issue which is not going away. Sunday sport continues to grow, and people's views may always differ.

4. Bible discovery - Romans 14:1-5

5 min

Read Romans 14:1-5 and discuss.

In light of these verses:

- Try to get to a place where you are fully convinced of your position.
- Appreciate that there will be a range of points of view.
- Don't judge each other for differing in opinion.

→ Link: There are three Biblical principles which help to work out the balance between Sunday sport and church. They are like 3 legs on a stool - we need them all to come to a firm position.

CREATED TO REST

5. Group work

Work in pairs. Read Genesis 2:2-3.

- What does this verse show us about rest?

→ Summary: God's blessing of that day is linked to the fact that God Himself rests on it. It is established, for creation, as a day of rest. It then becomes the day of rest for all humanity (and even fields have to rest). Rest is stopping work for a period of time. However, Genesis 2 is not all there is to say about rest and the Sabbath.

Read Hebrews 4:8-16 and Matthew 11:29.

→ Explain: The rest promised to the Israelites wasn't referring to their arrival in the promised land – it was spiritual rest that Christ's death and resurrection provided. We will fully rest with Christ in the new creation – a great promise for us.

- How do we access this rest? (*Believe God's word and go to Christ*)
- What does that mean for us on our rest days now? (*Rest is not only stopping work, but re-orientating yourself towards Christ*)

Discuss:

- What is your point of view about Sunday sport in the light of the above?

6. Debate in pairs

5 min

Work in pairs where one person is A and the other is B. A's will defend the following statement for 1 minute:

- 'If I have rest in Jesus, there is no need to rest in my day-to-day life.'

Then B's will defend this position for 1 minute:

- 'Rest is a creation mandate. How can you play sport on a Sunday and uphold this fact?'

→ Summarize: Rest is a creation mandate for life on Earth. It is established by God and illustrated in Genesis. However, true and lasting rest will only come later when we are with God in Heaven for eternity.

BORN TO WORSHIP

7. Watch video and discuss

10 min

▶ Show 'Born to Play' video

Work in groups of 3 or 4. Discuss.

- What are your reflections on this video which is based on Romans 12:1-2?
- How does this Biblical perspective inform our thinking when considering sport on Sundays?

MADE TO MEET

8. Provocative scenario - Hebrews 10:24-25

10 min

→ Imagine the following scenario: The government has passed a law that makes our faith illegal. Government officials are closing down churches and arresting believers. To meet together in public to worship is punishable by death.

Discuss in pairs:

- How would you feel about this? What would you do or want to do?

→ Teach - In Hebrews 10 the Romans have declared faith in Christ illegal - and thus the temptation is to give up meeting together in the face of persecution. Yet, even as the Hebrew believers might risk their lives doing so, the message is 'Don't give up!' Without meeting together, it is very hard to run your race of faith.

Ask someone to read Hebrews 10:24-25 aloud.

→ Teach: What are the benefits of church? (*Spurring one another on - encouragement in godly living - love and good deeds - verse 25a. Helping you last the course as a believer - verse 25b*)

→ Link back to stimulus e.g. - like a marathon we need people to cheer us on. Coal taken out of the fire loses heat.

9. Review

5 min

Work in pairs.

Discuss how you would answer this question. Prepare and rehearse a 1-minute response based on your discussion.

- 'If all of life is worship, why should I bother going to church?'

→ Summarize the journey so far: 3 principles - We are created to rest, we are born to worship, and we are made to meet.

10. Work groups

10 min

Ask people to sit in groups according to which is the best match for them:

1. Those for whom their sport often or always falls on a Sunday - this is a real-life issue.
2. Those who see this as a big cultural issue today but it doesn't affect them directly.

Discuss:

- How will these principles help inform your future decisions about sport and church?
- What practical faith-sustaining tips can you give to those who feel they have to compete on a Sunday? (*e.g. finding an evening service, friends to meet together during the week, find someone to meet 1-2-1, etc*)

11. Suggested next steps**2 min**

Speak to your pastor or church about this issue.

Think through how you would talk to your sports friends about this issue.

Discuss the issue with others and hear a variety of viewpoints.

12. Pray**5 min**

Individually pray for God to help you in your choices with this issue.

Notes for facilitators:

The video 'Created to Rest' has been chosen because Hebrews 4 is difficult to unpack.

Detailed session notes**2. Sunday sports spectrum**

Set up the room with two pieces of paper at either end. Then say:

1. 'Believers must not play sport on a Sunday. Sunday is God's special holy day and a time for church.'
2. 'Believers are free in Christ and there are no special days so I can play sport when I want.'

Ask people to stand on the spectrum in the place where they would mostly put themselves. Ask them to speak to the person next to them about why they put themselves where they did.

Developing lasting friendships with sportspeople

In order to be good witnesses to our sports friends sitting in the stadium, we need to invest time in them and develop genuine friendships with them. We need to be authentic in how we live out our faith if we are to expect them to hear the message of Christ from us. We must conduct ourselves with integrity.

Common mistakes

There are two patterns that believers can fall into when part of a sports club or team:

- Share but never there.
- There but never share.

The first refers to a believer who will share the Gospel without knowing much about the people they are talking to. They fail to present the Gospel in a way that connects personally to others. The second refers to those believers who are involved in a club or team, but who do not vocalize their faith at the sports club. Or they live a deceitful life which actually contradicts the Gospel.

An authentic friendship

Do we care for our sports friends genuinely? Are we interested in their whole lives? Do we get alongside those having a hard time? Do we celebrate joyful occasions with our sports friends? How well do we know the people we train and compete with?

- 1 Thessalonians 2: Paul is with his friends, the Thessalonians.
- Verse 8: Paul loved them deeply, sharing his life with them as well as the good news about Jesus.
- 1 Thessalonians 2: we are to do the same as Paul – be there and share. Invest in people and to be vulnerable with them. This is how deep friendships are formed.

The cost of relationships

Actively forging friendships with others takes time and effort. But it will create genuine opportunities to speak to our friends about the Gospel. If we are living distinctly as people who care for the wellbeing of our sports friends (i.e. loving them as God commanded us to do) we will stand out – we will be ambassadors for God, and they will see Him through us.

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

1. Introduction

2 min

This session will explore a Biblical framework for our friendships:

- Why our behavior matters
- What the Bible has to say about authentic friendships
- How a believer in sport can bring the principles of the Bible to their friendships in order to be faithful to God

WHY IT MATTERS

2. Pair and share

5 min

Work with a partner. Describe 3 of your relationships with others in your club or team:

- one sportsperson you know well and consider a friend
- one sportsperson that you know but wouldn't class as a close friend
- one person in the club that you don't know well

3. Personal reflection

5 min

Work alone. Take time to reflect.

If each person were to be asked to talk about you, what would they say about the following:

- My attitude towards them?
- My on and off field behavior?
- My faith in Jesus?

4. Teach

5 min

→ Explain: There are two tendencies believers can fall into when part of a sports club or team: Either 'share but never there' or 'there but never share'.

→ *Share but never there*: we tell sportspersons the Gospel without knowing much about them. We don't know their likes, dislikes, struggles or joys, and therefore we can present the Gospel to them in unhelpful ways.

→ *There but never share*: we are involved in the club or team but our faith in Jesus does not come with us. People may know us as a follower of Jesus, but this is not shared explicitly with them.

5. 'Share' or 'There' illustration

5 min

Put a line of tape across the center of the room. Place a sign 'SHARE' at one end and a sign 'THERE' at the other end. Ask participants to think about the first person they described, then go and stand on the line where they think that friend would place them in light of the above description of 'Share' and 'There.'

- Are they closer to There or Share?

Ask a couple of participants to tell you why they placed themselves where they did.

Repeat the exercise with the two other people they described, each time debriefing in the same way.

WHAT MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS LOOK LIKE

6. Bible discovery - 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

10 min

Work in groups of three. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12.

Half the groups should take the first task, and the rest, the second task.

- Task 1: Make a list (with Bible references) of what Paul was *like* with the Thessalonians (his characteristics)
- Task 2: Make a list (with Bible references) of how Paul *acted* when he was with the Thessalonians (his actions).

7. Inter-group learning

5 min

Have each Task 1 group combine with a Task 2 group.

Ask them to share and compare what they found out about what Paul was *like* and how Paul *acted*.

What can they learn from Paul personally?

How would their friends respond if they consistently behaved as Paul did?

8. Teach - 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

2 min

→ Explain: 1 Thessalonians 2 is a snapshot of what Paul was *like* and how he *acted* when he was with his friends, the Thessalonians. We see from verse 8 that he loved them deeply, sharing his life as well as the good news about Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 2 encourages us to do the same: to be there and to share. Deep friendships are formed by investing in people and being vulnerable with them. Just as 1 Thessalonians talks about how are to be like a caring mother in our friendships; we can be 'delighted to share' life and the Gospel with one another.

9. Memory verse

3 min

Ask each person to write 1 Thessalonians 2:8 on a piece of paper.

Ask them to say it aloud.

Ask them to repeat it without looking at the paper. Have them repeat it until they feel they have remembered it.

Ask them to fold up the piece of paper and place it in their wallet where they can be reminded of it later.

HOW DO I LIVE OUT MY RELATIONSHIPS IN SPORT?

10. Pair and share

5 min

Reflect on the following questions:

- When did you last get alongside a sports friend who was having a hard time?
- When did you last celebrate with a sports friend in their joy?
- How much do you know about the lives of the people you train and compete with?

11. Group spider-diagram task (see notes)

10 min

Work in groups of 4. Ask the participants to create a spider-diagram on a large piece of paper with their answers to the questions below:

- Where do you come into contact with sportspeople in a sport season?
- Outside of the season?

- Where do your sports friends spend their time?
- What do your sports friends do when they aren't involved in sport?

Discuss:

- How much time do you spend in these places?
- How could you spend more time with your sports friends?
- What would the cost be to you if you did this?

12. Do I care?

7min

Mapping Task: 'Do I know their pressures? Do I know their joys?'

On a piece of paper, map out the formation of your team (*e.g. goal keeper, defense, midfield, attack*)

Name all the people and then ask yourself what you know about each of them.

Pray for each person as you do this.

Pair and share

- How can I serve these people more?
- How can I allow myself to be served by them? (*being vulnerable is important in developing friendship*)
- How can I show concern towards them?
- How can I demonstrate interest in their lives?
- How will this affect my calendar?
- How will this affect my cash?
- How will this affect my time?

13. Apply and commit

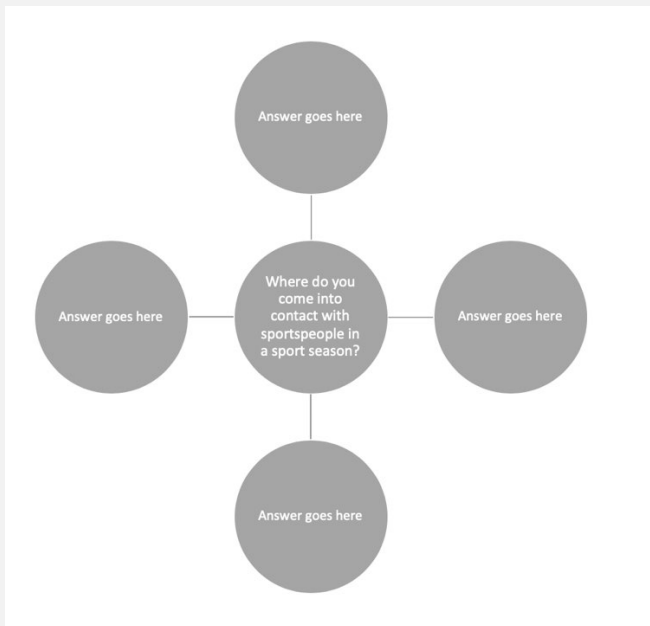
4 min

Individually, choose two of the above responses and write them down as a commitment for this week. Decide for each: Who, what, where, when, how.

In pairs, pray for each other in the commitment you have just made.

→ Summary: In this session we have highlighted the two tendencies believers can fall into when in a sports club or team: 'share but never there' and 'there but never share'. We have seen that Paul, when with the Thessalonians, loved them deeply, shared his life with them, and shared the good news about Jesus. We have challenged each other to live this out authentically in our sports clubs.

Group spider-diagram example:



Put the question in the middle and the places around the outside.

Bringing sportspeople to hear the gospel

Why is it important?

Romans 10:12-17 reminds us that the Gospel is for everyone – Jew and Gentile – and that ‘faith comes from hearing the message’. Evangelistic events where the Word of God is preached is one way this can be fulfilled.

Evangelistic events can be wide-ranging in nature from a sports tournament or quiz with a talk, to a dialogue dinner or watching live sport with a talk during half-time.

In John 1, Philip has been called to follow Jesus and invites Nathanael along to see for himself. The phrase ‘come and see’ is apt for this session. Evangelistic events can be a great addition to your personal evangelism. They help people hear from a different voice and ‘come and see’ what you believe.

What does it look like to invite and bring sportspeople to hear the Gospel being proclaimed?

This is a very practical section to think about when inviting sportspeople to an event:

- What to do before the event – during the event – following the event.
- Remember that events should not be seen in isolation but always as part of a journey.
- God uses people to proclaim His word.
- God uses His proclaimed Word to save people.

60-70 minute session

TRAINING SESSION OUTLINE

1. Welcome and session overview

2 min

→ In this session we will be considering the role of a guest event in the journey of a sports person coming to know Christ.

We will look at:

- Why Gospel proclamation is important
- What it looks like to invite and bring sportspeople to an event
- What we need to consider before, during and after the event

2. Pair and share

5 min

- Can you think of any events you attended that helped you on your journey to faith? Summer camp, weekend away, evangelistic event?
- Share with each other - What was special about it? What impact did it have on you?

3. Gospel reminder

5 min

→ Review: Before we start thinking about inviting and bringing people to an event, we must remind ourselves of Matthew 9 (Essential Session 1). God is the Lord of the harvest, and we are His workers. Therefore, salvation is in His hands which should prevent us from feeling pride or despair in our evangelism.

→ Read Romans 9:15-16 aloud. God's sovereignty doesn't depend on human desire or effort.

Give the group a moment for individual reflection:

- What is your natural tendency in evangelism? Is it pride or despair?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BRING SPORTSPEOPLE TO HEAR THE GOSPEL BEING PROCLAIMED?

4. Non-communication game

5 min

Purpose: to show the power of words being proclaimed.

Play a game where the group is not allowed to communicate with one another whilst solving a problem. e.g. get in order of your birthdays from January-December; get into pairs where you both have something in common.

Then do the same task, but this time allow them to speak.

→ Conclude: Communication and speaking aloud to one another makes things clearer.

5. Bible teaching - Romans 10:12-17

10 min

Read Romans 10:12-17.

→ Explain: The call here in Paul's letter to the Romans is that everyone has the opportunity to hear the Gospel. Our challenge is that we don't simply decide for our friends how they might respond to the Gospel without actually inviting them to hear it. The danger is that we may 'negotiate' on behalf of our friends, thinking there is no chance they would ever make a decision to follow Jesus.

Discuss:

- How would you persuade another believing friend to 'not negotiate' by using the passage in Romans 10?

→ Explain: The Gospel is for all (verse 12). A person needs to call and believe in the Lord to be saved (verses 13-14). People need to hear the Gospel being preached in order to call (verses 14b -17).

6. Group discussion

10 min

→ Link: Think of the last time you heard the Gospel being proclaimed in a public setting (gathering, summer camp, guest event, school or university mission week)

Describe the occasion.

- What can you remember about what was said?
- Was the Gospel proclaimed?
- Was there a challenge to respond?

→ Key points: God uses people to proclaim His word. God uses His proclaimed Word to save people.

Note: Acknowledge that hearing the Gospel in a public setting might not always have been a positive experience.

7. Relay game

5 min

Play a simple team relay competition with a baton.

→ Debrief: We pass on the Good News to others; friends bring friends to events.

8. Bible discovery - John 1:43-51

10 min

Read John 1:43-51. Discuss.

John 1:47 refers to Psalm 32 meaning that Nathanael is a man of integrity and an idealist.

In John 1:48 we see that Jesus has supernatural insight into something that happened under the fig tree, but we don't know what it was and whether it was good or bad!

It is worth acknowledging that John 1's primary application is not as a methodology for mission.

Discussion questions:

- What did Philip and Nathanael discover about Jesus? (verse 51)
- What stands out about the way Philip takes Nathanael to Jesus?

Apply

- How do you find inviting people to events?
- How does this passage encourage or challenge you?

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO INVITE AND BRING SPORTSPEOPLE TO HEAR THE GOSPEL BEING PROCLAIMED?

9. Discuss best practice for bring someone to an event

20 min

→ Link: These scenarios will help people discuss top tips before, during and after an event.

Before the event

Work in pairs. Discuss:

- Your club captain has given you a 30 second slot at training to announce an event where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Write out what you will say in your invitation - what is essential to include?

Role play this invitation with a partner.

- You are in charge of your club's social media accounts – write a post that invites people to the outreach event.

Compare thoughts with others in the room.

→ Top Tips

- Make sure people know what they are coming to (Gospel content).
- Don't apologize for the talk in advance.
- Don't throw in the fact that there will be a talk (Gospel content) as an after-thought.

During event

→ Link: Think about the ways your actions and words could have a positive or negative effect on someone's experience of the event.

- What questions could you ask following the talk to engage in a conversation with the people you have brought?

Compare thoughts with others in the room.

→ Top Tips

- Find the right balance between being too heavy on Gospel content and moving on too quickly.
- Ask questions like 'What did you find interesting about the talk?' or 'What do you think about the talk we've just heard?'

After the event

Discuss:

- What are some of the ways in which people might react after the event?
- How can you be prepared for an aggressive rejection through to a warm response?
- How can you use your next training, match or meet to follow up with them?

→ Top Tips

- Make it easy for people to walk away or say no – don't induce guilt.
- Think through the 'What next?' – e.g. read the Bible 1-1, small group seeker Bible study, church services.

Work in pairs. Discuss:

- What events you could organize or invite sportspeople to in the coming six months?

→ Examples of possible events:

- Active sport (dodgeball / 5-a-side)
- Watching sport (live or big screen)
- Food and sport
- Competition (quiz)
- Sports personality (testimony or speaking)

10. Reflection

5 min

→ Remember that events should not be seen in isolation but always as part of a journey. Public proclamation of God's word is important in the process of helping our sports friends engage with the Gospel. We value the context and power of preaching as we looked at in Romans 10.

→ Remember: God uses people to proclaim His word. God uses His proclaimed word to save people.

Think about this question alone.

- Where have you been challenged in this session?



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