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PURSUE STUDY | ATHLETE | FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ATHLETES



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FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ATHLETES
EXISTS TO HELP STUDENTS AND COACHES
PURSUE GOD. USE OUR RESOURCES FOR
YOUR HUDDLE OR FOR 1-ON-1 MENTORING.

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We believe the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review Lifeway's doctrinal guideline, please visit lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

HOW TO USE	04
GETTING STARTED	05
THE FOUR	06
SESSION 1: PURSUE TRUTH	07
SESSION 2: PURSUE FAITH	15
SESSION 3: PURSUE LIFE	23
SESSION 4: PURSUE IDENTITY	31
SESSION 5: PURSUE GROWTH	39
SESSION 6: PURSUE TEAM	47
SESSION 7: PURSUE FOCUS	55
SESSION 8: PURSUE MISSION	63
COACH GUIDES	71

HOW TO USE

Since 1954, FCA has been challenging coaches and athletes on the professional, college, high school, junior high and youth levels to use the powerful platform of sports to reach every coach and every athlete with the transforming power of Jesus Christ. We pursue our vision and mission through the strategy of **to and through the coach**. We seek to minister first **to** coaches. Then, when ready, we minister **through** coaches to their fellow coaches, teams, and athlete leaders.

This season, FCA hopes you, your team, and your family learn more about what it means to pursue God. This eight-session study will guide young athletes to go deeper as they study how to pursue truth, faith, life, identity, and more.

This all-in-one book is designed for coaches, athletes, and their families. Each session is designed specifically for kids to follow along with their coach. There are fun activities along the way, Bible stories, and great questions about what it means to be a kid-athlete, have fun, and pursue Jesus!

WHAT HAPPENS AT EACH SESSION?

Each session is divided into the following parts:

- **WARM-UP (INTRODUCTION)** — To begin each session, kids will play games or do quick activities to engage their interest in what they will learn during the session.
- **WORKOUT (BIBLE STUDY)** — Kids will hear stories about different people in the Bible and their pursuit of God. They will also learn about key points and how to apply biblical truths to their lives and their sport.
- **WRAP UP (CONCLUSION)** — During this time, kids will review the key points of what they studied during the session. They will learn how to “Share The FOUR” and end the session with an active game related to what they have studied in “Overtime.”

Each session includes two devotionals for kids to pursue deeper personal study and a “Practice at Home” page to involve the whole family!

Coaches can find step-by-step instructions on how to lead each session in the “Coach Guides” at the back of this resource.

GETTING STARTED

- 1** Pray. Ask God to guide your planning, preparation, teaching, and follow-up for the study of this season. Thank God for the opportunity to teach your team how to grow closer to Him throughout their lives, and pray that God will grant you great love for the kids on your team.
- 2** Choose a meeting time and place. Consult your league directors, if needed. Consider the average practice time and how much time you will need to complete each session. Try to find a meeting area that is large enough for the number of kids you expect so they can play active games and have fun. Consider if your kids will be most attentive before practice, during a half-time break, or at the end of practice.
- 3** Recruit Team Leaders. Enlist at least one person to help you. Explain to the potential leaders what is expected from them, what their responsibilities would be for both planning and teaching, and what dates and times of each practice.
- 4** Determine your schedule. If possible, try to arrange eight weeks in a row to maintain consistency in learning. If that's not possible, try to line up sessions as close together as you can.
- 5** Plan ahead. Meet with other leaders to decide who will do each part of the session. (See the *What Happens at Each Session* section on page 4 for more information.) Gather supplies for overtime games as needed. A list of items needed for each activity is printed in each Coach's Guide (p. 71-96).

SHARING THE GOSPEL RESOURCES:

The ABCs of Becoming A Christian (CSB: 9781462753642) is sold in packs of 25 and provides helpful information about how to become a Christian. (Also available in KJV: 9781462753659.)

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (CSB: 9781430066965) is sold in packs of 10 and emphasizes God's plan of salvation from Creation to Jesus and how we respond to the gospel. (Also available in ESV: 9781430066958.)

THE FOUR



GOD LOVES YOU

God made you and loves you! His love is boundless and unconditional. God is real, and He wants you to personally experience His love and discover His purpose of your life through a relationship with Him. (Genesis 1:27, John 3:16)



SIN SEPARATES YOU

You cannot experience God's love when you ignore Him. People search everywhere for meaning and fulfillment—but not with God. They don't trust God and ignore His ways. The Bible calls this sin. Everyone has sinned.

Sin damages your relationships with other people and with God. It keeps us from experiencing the fulfilling life that God intends for us. The result: you are eternally separated from God and the life He has planned for you. (Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Isaiah 59:2)



JESUS RESCUES YOU

Sin does not stop God from loving you. Because of God's great love, He became a human being in Jesus Christ and gave His life for you. At the cross, Jesus took your place and paid the penalty of death that you deserve for your sins.

Jesus died but He rose to life again. Jesus offers you peace with God and a personal relationship with Him. Through faith in Jesus, you can experience God's love daily, discover your purpose, and have eternal life after death. (1 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, Romans 5:8)



WILL YOU TRUST JESUS?

You can place your trust in Jesus by faith through prayer. Prayer is talking with God. God knows your heart and is not concerned with your words as much as He is with the attitude of your heart. Here's a suggested prayer:

Dear God, thank You for loving me and wanting the best for my life. I have lived my life for myself and done things my way, and I am truly sorry.

Jesus, I believe that You are God and have forgiven all my sins by dying and coming back to life again for me. I trust You and ask You to be Lord of my life. I surrender my life to You. You are my God, my Savior, and my Lord. Let me experience Your love and Your good plans for my life! Amen.

SESSION 1

PURSUE TRUTH

KEY VERSE

John 8:32

KEY PASSAGE

Luke 19:1-10

KNOW

We can pursue truth
even when it is hard.

GROW

Jesus pursues us even
when we mess up.

GO

We show others the
truth by our actions.

See Coach Guide on page 71.

WARM-UP

TRUE — FALSE — RUN

Line up in the center of the play area. Your coach will call out a few true or false statements. On the count of three, if you think the statement is true, run to the right. If you think the statement is false, run to the left.

When you were running to the right, what were you running away from?

What about when you were running to the left?

In sports and in life, we have to determine which way we are going to run. Are we going to run toward what is true, or are we going to run toward what is not true? Today, we're going to think about what it means to chase after truth.

TAKE IT FURTHER

Mark where you believe each statement falls on the true or false scale! How do you know what is true or false?

- 1 We can always know what is true and what is false.

T F

- 2 The Bible is the best source for truth.

T F

- 3 Our friends always tell us the truth.

T F

- 4 If it keeps us from trouble, it's okay not to tell the truth.

T F

- 5 We should always try to chase after what is true.

T F

WORKOUT

RIGHTEOUSNESS: right things

PURSUE TRUTH

“But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.” 1 Timothy 6:11 (NLT)

Over the next few weeks, we are going to talk about what we are called to pursue.

What was Timothy supposed to run away from?

What are some wrong things we should run away from or choose not to do?

JUMBLE WORDS

What does the word *pursue* mean? Circle the letters of a different color to find the definition of pursue.

TRACK WHAT AFTER GETS NET

First Timothy 6:11 explains that we are to pursue righteousness. In other words, we are to chase after right things.

There is a story in the Bible of a man named Zacchaeus who was trying to see Jesus passing by on the road, but the crowds were very large and Zacchaeus was not very tall. Let's see what Zacchaeus did!

JESUS PURSUED ZACCHAEUS

Jesus was traveling through Jericho (JER-ih-KO), where a man named Zacchaeus (Za-KEE-us) lived. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector, and he was very rich. Zacchaeus was in charge of collecting taxes for the Roman government from the Jewish people in Jericho.

When Jesus came into town, a large crowd gathered to see Him. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, too, but Zacchaeus was a short man. He could not see over the crowd! So Zacchaeus ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to watch for Jesus to pass by.

When Jesus came by, He looked up into the tree and saw Zacchaeus. "Come down, Zacchaeus," Jesus said. "I want to stay with you today." Zacchaeus hurried down from the tree. He was happy to welcome Jesus.

When the people saw what happened, they complained. "Zacchaeus is a sinner!" they said. "And Jesus is going to stay at his house!" The people knew that many tax collectors were dishonest and cheated people. They took more money from people than they should.

Zacchaeus told Jesus, "I will give half of everything I have to the poor. And if I cheated anyone, I will pay him back four times as much."

Jesus told Zacchaeus, "Today you have been saved. I have come to seek and to save the lost."

—Based on Luke 19:1-10

PURSUE: to chase after

KEY POINTS

1 Know: We can pursue truth even when it is hard.

List ways we can pursue truth even when it is hard.

2 Grow: Jesus pursues us even when we mess up.

Even though Zacchaeus had made poor choices, what did Jesus want to do with Zacchaeus?

3 Go: We show others the truth by our actions.

How did Zacchaeus show he truly wanted to pursue truth?

Why is it hard to say we are sorry?

How can we show others that we are sorry?

WRAP-UP

Just like Zacchaeus, we all end up making wrong choices, breaking a rule, or making a mistake. Sometimes we break a rule and don't even know it or realize it until the referee blows the whistle. Jesus pursued Zacchaeus even though he did wrong things because He cared about him. Jesus pursues us even when we make wrong choices, too. John 8:32 says that when we know the truth, the truth will set us free. Jesus is the truth that Zacchaeus needed in his life, and Jesus is the truth that we need in our lives.

SHARE THE FOUR

Match each sentence by drawing a line to its symbol.

GOD LOVES YOU

SIN SEPARATES YOU

JESUS RESCUES YOU

WILL YOU TRUST JESUS?



PURSUE GOD'S WORD

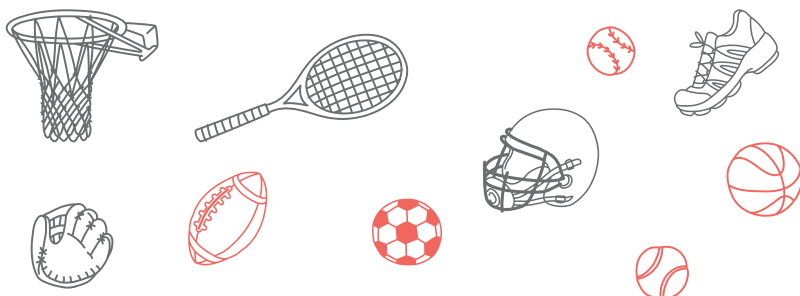
READY!

"But we belong to God, and those who know God listen to us. If they do not belong to God, they do not listen to us. That is how we know if someone has the Spirit of truth or the spirit of deception." 1 John 4:6 (NLT)

We know God and by knowing God we can know the difference between truth and lies.

SET!

Draw a line to connect each ball to the proper equipment.



Why is it important to have the right equipment?

God's Word is the way that God speaks to us.

God's Word gives us instructions, but we must follow them.

God's Word is the right equipment that leads us to the truth.

GO!

Pray: Dear Jesus, help me always read Your Word and follow its instructions as I seek truth.

PURSUE LOVE

READY!

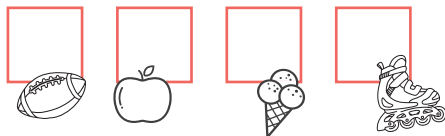
"It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out." 1 Corinthians 13:6 (NLT)

Love is not happy about wrongdoing but is happy when truth wins out.

Have you ever played in a game where there were no referees? Imagine how the players might be tempted to cheat if no one was there to call a foul. That would probably be a lot of responsibility for each player to be trusted with being honest about the game. Have you ever been tempted to cheat and tell a lie to help you win a match? The thought of cheating or lying may have crossed your mind before, but winning by doing something wrong is not really winning. Is it? Instead, we win when we tell the truth. Telling the truth might cost us the sporting game, but God is happy when we pursue truth.

SET!

Fill in the blocks with the first letter of each image:



Be truthful, do you play fair and honest? Or would you be willing to lie or cheat if it meant winning the game?

How can we pursue truth during practices and games?

GO!

Pray: Dear Jesus, help me always tell the truth even when it is hard.

PRACTICE AT HOME

KNOW

*“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
John 8:32 (NLT)*

GROW

Write each word of John 8:32 on an index card and place them in different areas around the inside or outside of your home.

Once the verse cards are hidden, have your family race to find all of the cards and put the cards in the correct verse order. Read the verse again and invite your family to share what this verse teaches about pursuing Jesus.

Remind your family of the importance of pursuing truth.

Are there any Bible verses you want to try to memorize? List a few.

How can this game help you hide God’s Word in your heart?

GO

Pray: Jesus, help us remember this week that You are truth. Thank You for teaching us that we can pursue others by sharing God’s truth.

PURSUE TRUTH

COACH GUIDE, SESSION 1

“But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.” 1 Timothy 6:11 (NLT)

One of the main reasons you decided to coach is because of love and the desire to help kids become better players and better people. This is also true of Jesus who loves us so much that He died on the cross. **The truth of His love is what we should always be pursuing.** When we pursue the truth of Jesus and His love for us, we always WIN!

Pray: Jesus help me live and coach from a spirit of love—a love for You, a love for others, and a love for sharing Your truth.

WARM-UP

Guide players to line up in the center of the play area in a single file line and spread out. Read one of the following true/false statements or create your own based on the rules of your team’s sport. If the statement is true, players will run to the right. If the statement is false, instruct them to run to the left.

Pro Tip: Write *True* and *False* on two different cones and place at opposite ends of the play area. Lead players to run to each cone if they think the statement is true or false.

- 1 When you score a touchdown in football, you get seven points. (*False; six points*)
- 2 The goalie in soccer can use his hands and feet. (*True*)
- 3 After four balls in baseball, you get a free base. (*True*)
- 4 After three fouls in basketball, you must sit out. (*False; five fouls*)
- 5 In basketball, you can dribble the ball with both hands at the same time. (*False; double dribble*)

Say: You all did a great job of listening and trying to figure out if what I said was true or not. That game was fun, but it also teaches a pretty good lesson about sports and life.

Ask: When you were running to the right, what were you running away from? (*false statements*)

Ask: When you were running to the left, what were you running away from? (*true statements*)

Say: In sports and in life, we have to determine which way we are going to run. Are we going to run toward what is true, or are we going to

run toward what is not true? We can pursue truth even when it's hard. Today, we're going to think about what it means to chase after truth.

Allow players to complete the "Take It Further" activity on page 8. Instruct players to mark where they believe each statement falls on the true or false scale!

Ask: How do you know what is true or false?

WORKOUT

Read 1 Timothy 6:11 (NLT):

"But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness."

Say: Over the next few weeks, we are going to talk about what we are called to pursue.

Ask: What was Timothy supposed to run away from? (*wrong things*)

Ask: What are some bad or evil things we should run away from or choose not to do?

Ask: What does the word pursue mean? (Guide players to solve for the answer in their books—*chase after something*, page 9.)

Say: This verse from 1 Timothy 6:11 explains that we are to pursue righteousness (*righteousness means to do right things*), living a life that honors God, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.

Say: Just like our game, there is a story of a guy named Zacchaeus who was pursuing or looking to see Jesus passing by on the road, but the crowds were large and Zacchaeus was not very tall. Let's see what Zacchaeus did!

Read the Bible Story on page 10.

KEY POINTS

Say: We can pursue truth even when it is hard.

Ask: Why was it hard for Zacchaeus to pursue Jesus? (*There was a large crowd; The people didn't like him; He had made some bad decisions and choices.*)

Guide players to write down ways they can pursue truth.

Say: Jesus pursues us even when we mess up.

Ask: Even though Zacchaeus had made poor choices, what did Jesus want to do with Zacchaeus? (*go to his home; be his friend*)

Say: We show others the truth by our actions.

Ask: How did Zacchaeus show he truly wanted to pursue truth? (*He said he was sorry; He paid back what he had stolen.*)

Ask: Why is it hard to say we are sorry? (*We are embarrassed, scared, and so forth.*)

Ask: How can we show our coach or teammates that we are sorry and want to change? (*apology, attitude on the field, text, and so forth*)

WRAP-UP


Say: Just like Zacchaeus, we all end up making wrong choices, breaking a rule, or making a mistake. Sometimes we break a rule and don't even know it or realize it until the referee blows the whistle. Jesus pursued Zacchaeus even though he did wrong things because Jesus cared about him. Jesus pursues us even when we mess up, too. John 8:32 says that when we know the truth, the truth will set us free. Jesus is the truth that Zacchaeus needed in his life, and Jesus is the truth that we need in our lives.

Lead kids to complete "Share The FOUR" activity on page 11, see the answers below. Complete overtime activities if time allows.

 **God loves you**

 **Jesus rescues you**

 **Sin separates you**

 **Will you trust Jesus?**

OVERTIME

Never Have I Ever: Sports Edition

Players line up at a starting point as you make a statement about a sports accomplishment or a sports rule.

If players have ever committed the foul or the accomplishment, they take a step forward.

Examples: Never have I ever hit a grand slam, received a red card, gotten a penalty, hit a free throw, and so forth.

Debrief: Zacchaeus made some wrong choices in his life. We all end up breaking a rule or messing up at some point in our lives. The good news is that Jesus pursues us even when we mess up. Jesus is the truth that Zacchaeus needed in his life, and Jesus is the truth that we need in our own lives.

Truth Freeze Tag

One player will be chosen as *It*. He must tag other players. When a player is tagged, he must freeze. The coach will select another player to be the truth teller who can set frozen players free by saying, "The truth has set you free." Frozen players may then enter back into the game.

*"And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
John 8:32 (NLT)*

John 8:32 says that the truth will set us free.



GET TO KNOW FCA

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes is touching millions of lives... one heart at a time. Since 1954, FCA has been challenging coaches and athletes on the professional, college, high school, junior high and youth levels to use the powerful platform of sport to reach every coach and every athlete with the transforming power of Jesus Christ. FCA focuses on serving local communities around the globe by engaging, equipping and empowering coaches and athletes to unite, inspire and change the world through the Gospel.

VISION

To see the world transformed by Jesus Christ through the influence of coaches and athletes.

MISSION

To lead every coach and athlete into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His church.

VALUES

Integrity, Serving, Teamwork, Excellence



For general questions on FCA and how to find local FCA staff, visit FCA.org or call 1-800-289-0909.

360
ATHLETE

360
SPORTS

Get the most from your study.

Customize your Bible study time with a guided experience and additional resources.



Join the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Lifeway Kids on an 8-week journey as you lead athletes to pursue a relationship with Jesus.

This study will equip coaches to guide young athletes and their families as they pursue Jesus in practical ways through:

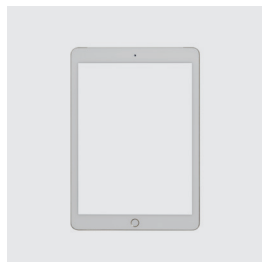
- Key biblical truths
- Practical application points
- Interactive activities that build your group into a team
- Engaging devotions for players
- Family engagement through "Practice at Home" pages each week

Your athletes will walk away from this study:

- Excited to pursue their faith
- Filled with key biblical truths
- Equipped to apply teachings to their sports and their daily lives

Since 1954, FCA has been challenging coaches and athletes to use the powerful platform of sport to reach every coach and every athlete with the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

Lifeway designs trustworthy experiences that fuel ministry. Today, the ministries of Lifeway reach more than 160 countries around the globe. For specific information on Lifeway Kids, visit lifeway.com/kids.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

PURSUE FOR COACHES

An 8-week study for FCA coaches with video bundle (9781087748252)
Digital: (9781087748269)

PURSUE FOR ATHLETES:

KIDS An 8-week study for athletes (ages 5-12) (9781087732428)
Digital: (9781087732435)

PURSUE FOR ATHLETES:

STUDENTS An 8-week study for student athletes with video bundle (9781087727226)
Digital: (9781087727233)

WHAT ARE YOU PURSUING?

As an athlete, you are passionate about what you pursue—competing in sports, being a better player, and having good sportsmanship. And God is passionate about pursuing you too! God loves you and accepts you as you are. You need to hear that you are already a winner with God. Jesus gave His life for you so that you could have a new life in Him. You can have a new purpose when you play and a new mission in life. Pursue that mission! Pursue Jesus!



Lifeway kids™

lifeway.com/fca

Religion/Christian Ministry/Children



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