


PURSUE



Lifeway Students



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We believe that 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 www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

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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 more information about FCA, visit FCA.org.

HOW TO USE

In this book, you will find eight weeks of group sessions and twenty days of devos. There are also some useful tips included in the back of this study to use during group time.

GROUP SESSIONS

Each group session uses the following format to facilitate simple yet meaningful interaction among group members along with the lessons presented in this study.

WARM-UP. This page includes questions to get the conversation started and to introduce the main teaching. After discussing the questions, consider watching the short introduction videos to kick off your workout.

WORKOUT. Using biblical truth to apply to life as a competitor, this section includes questions and statements to help student athletes learn what it takes to pursue God.

WRAP UP. In this section, students will see how Scripture applies to their everyday lives and calls for their dedication to Jesus and His ministry.

OVERTIME. This is a chance for students to further engage the group session and play with the topic on their own. Encourage students to complete the activity on their own and discuss it the following week.

PERSONAL DEVOS

TRAINING TIME. There are twenty personal devos at the end of this study. Encourage students to begin a habit of daily study over the weeks following your time together. Each devo includes a short teaching, followed by a few questions and Scripture passages to continue their exploration.

SESSION 1

PURSUE TRUTH

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

John 8:32

WARM-UP

Q: What athletic pursuit is most important to you right now?

Q: How much time do you spend each day working toward that goal?

Q: What would achieving your athletic pursuits mean to you?

• **WATCH SESSION 1 VIDEO**

WORKOUT

LOOKING FOR THE TRUTH

In Luke 19:1-10, we read about a man named Zacchaeus, a tax collector who cheated the people in Jericho and became very wealthy. At that time, Jesus had gained a reputation as a great teacher and miracle worker. Zacchaeus wanted to catch a glimpse of Jesus, but his short stature made it difficult for him to see over the crowd. So, he climbed into a tree and waited for Jesus to walk past.

When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today." Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. But the people were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled. Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!" Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost" (Luke 19:5-10).

Zacchaeus pursued truth and found a new path to fulfillment. Once he caught a glimpse of Jesus, his wealth no longer mattered in light of the eternal treasure the Son of God offered him.

Q: In what ways can you relate to Zacchaeus's story?

Q: Describe a time when you have done things out of the ordinary to pursue truth. What was the result of that pursuit?

KNOW THE WHAT

When we're pursuing big dreams, close relationships, or material things, we can easily let our pursuit drive our focus, actions, behaviors, and priorities. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but what if pursuing those things ultimately isn't healthy or isn't good for us in the long run?

That's why it's important that we "know the what," or understand what we really need in our lives. The Bible is clear about what that is—a relationship with Jesus Christ. It was Jesus who explained why this is so important while teaching His followers:

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

A few chapters earlier, Jesus revealed why it is so important to pursue truth.

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

In other words, Jesus was saying living out truth sets us free from empty pursuits, the pressure to perform, the desire to please others, and the guilt and shame of our sin.

In a world where nothing seems to be certain, we can trust that God's Word is the absolute truth and never changes. Here are just a few truths we can hold onto:

- God created us in His image (Gen. 1:27).
- We were all born sinners, separated from God (Rom. 3:23; 5:12).
- God sent His Son Jesus to die for our sins (John 3:16).
- Salvation is available for anyone who repents of their sins and accepts Christ as their Lord and Savior (Rom. 10:9).
- God has a purpose and plan for everyone (John 15:16).
- There is a place called heaven where those who trust and believe in Christ will spend eternity (John 14:2-3).

While these are only a fraction of the truths we find in the Bible, we can experience more great truths as we dive into God's Word.

Q: Why are material pursuits temporary?

Q: When you pursue material things, do you feel satisfied with what you have, or do you feel the need for something more?

Q: Which one of the truths listed above resonates with you the most? Which one do you struggle to believe?

WRAP UP

If you're tired of pursuing material things that don't last, consider these three steps that will help you pursue the ultimate truth that can only be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ:

1. Read the Truth: First and foremost, you must believe that the Bible is truly the living, breathing Word of God. Then, be intentional about studying the Bible daily.

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires (Heb. 4:12).

2. Pray the Truth: Ask God to forgive your sins and invite Jesus to come into your heart and rule as Lord over your life.

If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Rom. 10:9).

3. Reach for Truth: Find a community of Christians who can help you grow closer to God and in your relationship with Him.

"Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come" (1 Tim. 4:8).

OVERTIME

It's not difficult to identify the things we're pursuing as athletes. Victories, championships, records, scholarships, and professional contracts are very tangible. But sometimes we need to step back to see the big picture of what we really want for our lives.

Below is a list of common pursuits. In the space provided, determine which of these things you spend the most time pursuing (1 = never, 10 = always).

Acceptance	_____
Achievement	_____
Community	_____
Education	_____
Fame	_____
Love	_____
Popularity	_____
Position	_____
Power	_____
Relationships	_____
Security	_____
Significance	_____
Wealth	_____

Q: Review your list and look at the three things that you spend the most time pursuing. What is the driving force behind your pursuit of those things?

Q: What are you currently doing to pursue those things?

Q: How do you expect your life to change once you attain the things you are pursuing?

Flip to page 56 and go through "The FOUR." If you haven't already committed your heart to Christ, talk to your coach or adult leader about making that game-changing decision today.