

THE

L- EMENTARY



FUNDAMENTALS

IAM3RD 2021 SPRING DEVOTIONAL



TIMELINE

01

WEEK ONE:
INTRO

02

WEEK TWO:
LIVE

03

WEEK THREE:
LOVE

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WEEK FOUR:
LISTEN

05

WEEK FIVE:
LEARN

06

WEEK SIX:
LOSE

07

WEEK SEVEN:
LEAD

08

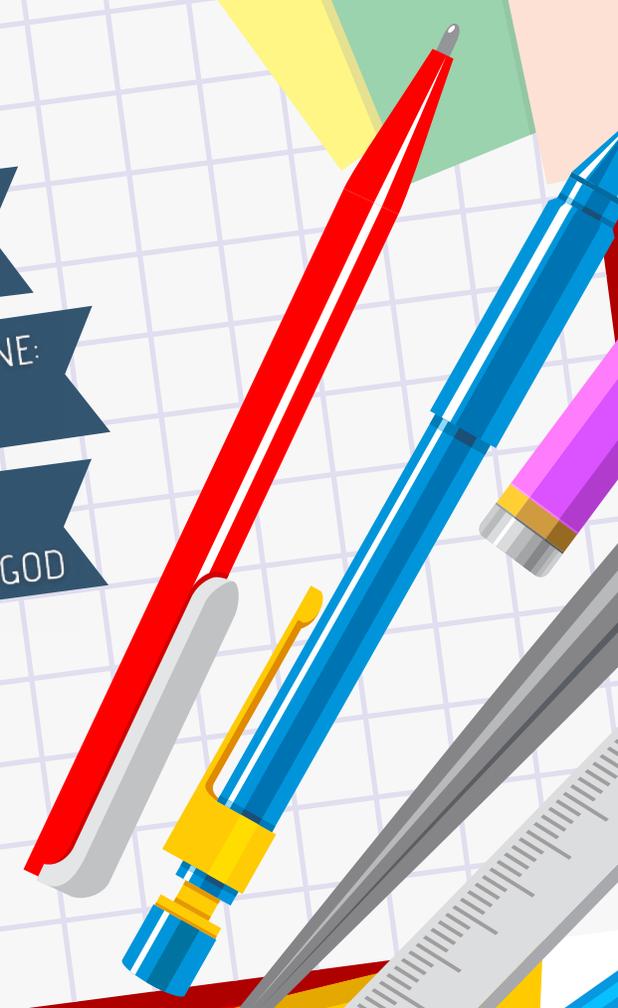
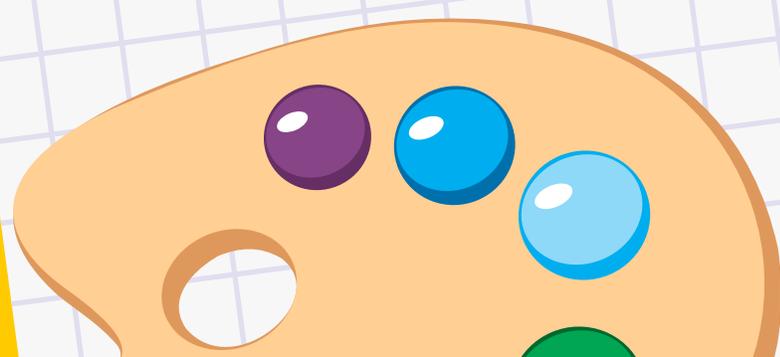
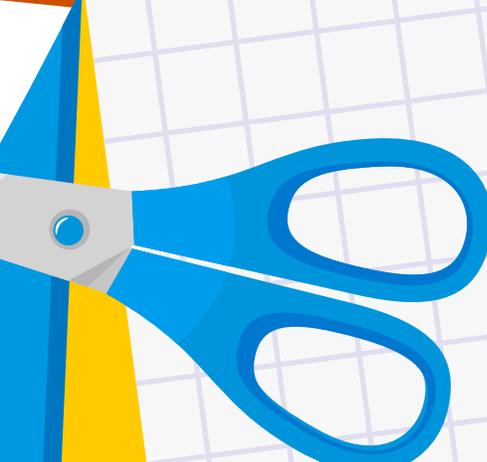
WEEK EIGHT:
LAUGH

09

WEEK NINE:
LIGHT

10

WEEK 10:
LET GO & LET GOD





MARCH 14-20

WEEK

ONE



INTRO

WELCOME BACK!

We're excited to be back in action and can't wait to bring the word of God to you, your family and your team. For this season, we are going to explore the different "L" words that are elementary (or "L" Ementary) fundamentals of playing soccer and growing in our understanding of what it means to be a Christian. These "L" Ementary fundamentals are important to understand and live out to help us develop and grow both as athletes and in our walks with Jesus Christ.

God is a LOVING, LISTENING, LIVING, LAUGHING Heavenly Father. These are just a few "L" Ementary words that we will explore throughout this season. Our hope is that one of these devotionals may change your life in the most positive way. For this week, we are just going to ask some basic questions to create discussion and provide your team a challenge for this next week.

CHALLENGE

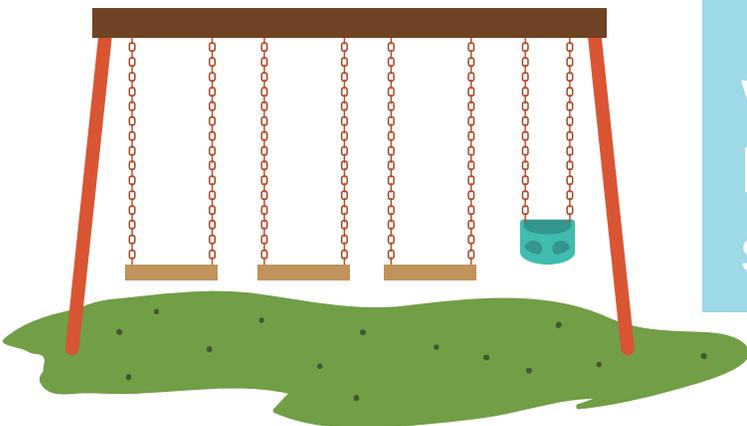


This week's challenge for each team member is to think of an "L" word that describes your team's mindset this season.

Bring that word back with an explanation on why you chose that word.



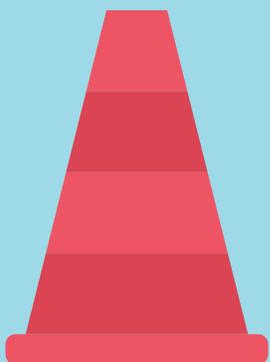
Then as a team vote on what word you'd like to be the "theme" of your season.



GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

- Give us an example of an “L” word that you have learned recently?
- What are some verbs (action words) that God calls us to live by? (Love, Learn, Laugh etc.)





MARCH 21-27

WEEK

TWO

LIVE

JOHN 10:7-10

Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- **WHY DO YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE?**
- **WHAT PURPOSE HAS GOD GIVEN YOU?**
- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TRULY LIVE YOUR LIFE FOR GOD?**

This week we are going to learn about how we: LIVE. How we LIVE our lives is so important. We need to make sure our priorities match God's priorities. One way to determine this is by asking and answering these questions: Do we love God above all else with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind? Are we living our lives for God? Does our family, friends, neighbors, or soccer teammates live their lives for God? If so, we are most likely putting ourselves in position to experience God in amazing ways during our everyday lives. If not, we might be missing out on what it truly means to LIVE.

Jesus says in John 10:10: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." Our hope and prayer this soccer season is that we all would begin to experience life to the fullest that Jesus offers on and off the soccer fields. We hope that as a team we will begin to LIVE our lives for God so that we experience what it means to have life to the fullest!

CHALLENGE

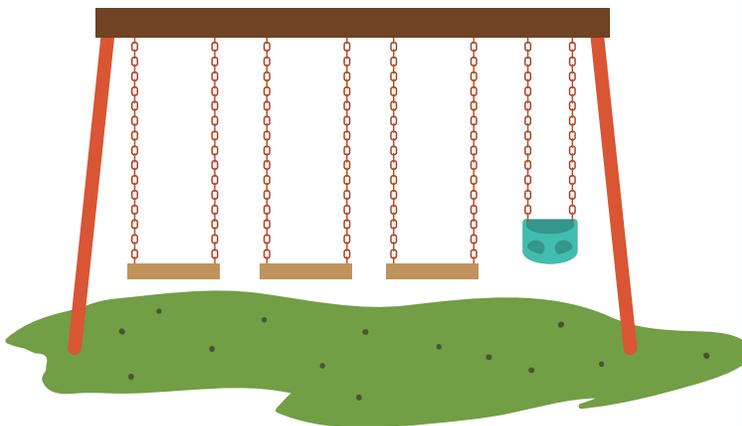


Team up with someone on your soccer team or at school and begin a commitment together to LIVE your lives for God

Maybe you could pray with each other before school, do something nice together for someone in need, or even organize a game or something fun for others.



As you do, remember to LIVE your life for God and to love God above all else. Remember, When you LIVE your life for God you will see His works in your life.



GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

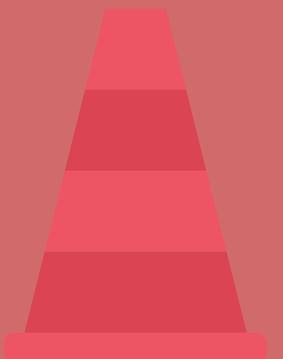
4 years-3rd Grade:

- What does it mean to love your neighbor?
- What are some ways you can do this as a soccer team?
- What does it mean to LIVE your life for God?
- Why is it important to LIVE your life for God and love Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?

QUESTIONS

4th & Up:

- What are some of your favorite things you love to do or things that make you happy?
- What does it mean to truly LIVE for God?
- What are some ways you can love your neighbor as yourself?
- How would your life look different if every day you LIVED your life for God?





MARCH 28-
APRIL 3

WEEK

THREE

LOVE

JOHN 4:12:

No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

EXTRA RESOURCE: MATTHEW 22:34-40

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- **WHY DO WE LOVE SOMETHING/ SOMEONE?**
- **HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL?**
- **HOW DOES CHRISTIANO RONALDO'S LOVE FOR SOCCER DIFFER FROM HIS LOVE FOR HIS FAMILY?**

Love is the next “L” Ementary fundamental we are going to study. Out of all the things God has asked us to do, he considers LOVE the most important. We must first LOVE God by seeking Him first daily and becoming his disciple. God then commands us to share His LOVE with other people by reaching out into the world through witnessing and discipling others. Because we cannot see God physically, we have to find him through LOVING others. If we LOVE one another, we will see God through those actions.

We can LOVE our coaches by respecting and listening to their instructions. We can LOVE our teammates by letting them go ahead of us in line or passing them the ball. LOVE is a great command and the single greatest thing God calls us to do. We can LOVE others, because God first LOVED us. That is the heart of 1 Am 3rd and what it means to put God first, others second, and ourselves third.

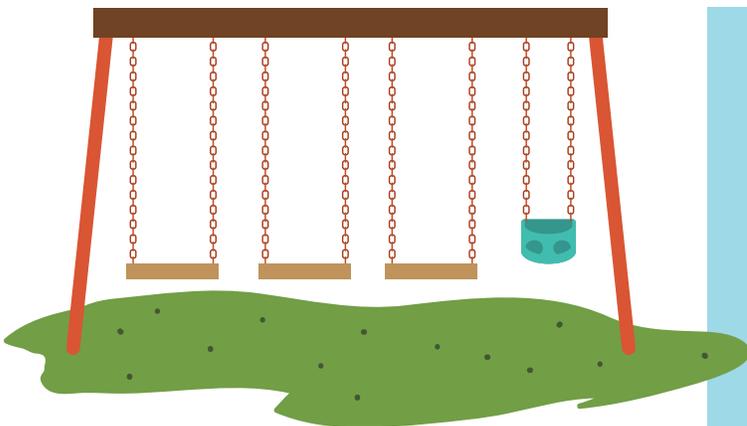
CHALLENGE



Look for a few ways you can LOVE your teammates, coaches, family, neighbors, or classmates this week.

It might be the same thing for all of them, such as saying something nice to encourage them, or it could be something different.

As you do, think about how your relationship with God grows more and more each time you show LOVE. We wouldn't be able to have the ability to LOVE if it wasn't for Jesus dying on the cross for us.



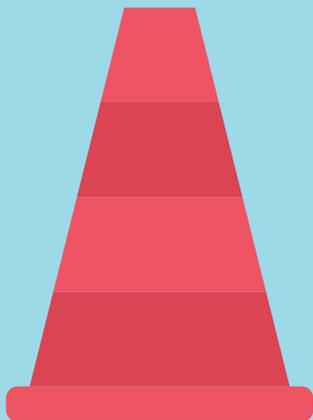
Remember, LOVE the Lord and LOVE your neighbors as you LOVE yourself.

GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

ALL AGES

- What is LOVE?
- Who LOVES you and everyone eternally?
- How does God show his LOVE to us?
Examples?
- What are some ways that you can LOVE other people? Teammates, friends, family, God?
- When we fail to LOVE others, what does that reveal about our relationship with God?





APRIL 4-10
WEEK

FOUR

LISTEN

JAMES 1:19:

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be QUICK to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- **IN SPORTS, WHO SHOULD WE BE LISTENING TO?**
- **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LISTEN FIRST?**

The next “L” Ementary fundamental we are going to study is: LISTEN. Why is it important to LISTEN? In soccer it is important for us to LISTEN to our coach. Our coach teaches and instructs us on how to become better players on and off the field. If we don't LISTEN, we will miss out on the valuable lessons and basic fundamentals that are necessary to learn in order to become a better soccer player.

As Christians it is important for us to LISTEN to the word of God (the Bible) and hold it as the ultimate authority for our lives. The verse above describes that we should be quick to listen and slow to speak, if we truly LISTEN to what we are reading, we can hear the voice of God speaking to us. That is a very powerful thing!

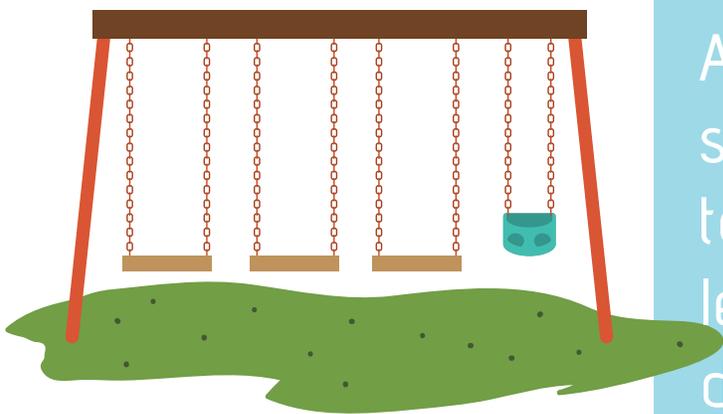
This week at practice, at school, and at home, let's begin to make an effort to practice the “L” Ementary fundamental of LISTENING – whether that's to our soccer coaches, teachers, parents, or to God through reading the Bible.

CHALLENGE



In a world where everyone one seems to be in a rush and never have time to talk, try to take a few minutes with someone you are close to and listen to them.

Whether it is about something they learned by reading the Bible or something going on in their life, just sit and LISTEN.



Ask questions, don't try to solve anything. People love to be heard. And as we learned from last week's devotional, LOVE is one of the ways we can show God to others.

GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

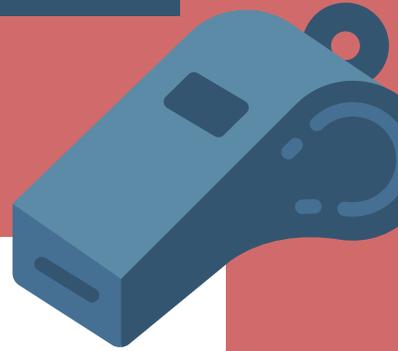
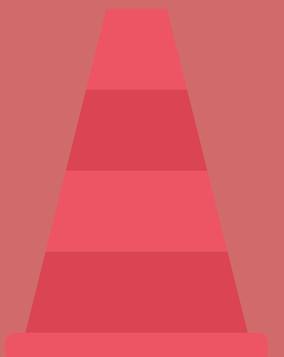
4 years-3rd Grade:

- Why is it important to LISTEN?
- How can we LISTEN better?
- Why is the Bible important?
- Why should you LISTEN to its words when you read it?
- Why should you LISTEN to your soccer coaches? Your parents? God?

QUESTIONS

4th & Up:

- Why is it so vital to LISTEN?
- How can we LISTEN more effectively?
- How would your life look different if you LISTENED more intentionally to your soccer coaches? Your parents? God?





APRIL 11-17
WEEK

FIVE

LEARN

PSALM 32:8:

*I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.*

PSALM 119:15-16 :

*I meditate on your precepts (laws) and consider your ways.
I delight in your decrees (order); I will not neglect your
word.*

EXTRA RESOURCE: PROVERBS 1:7



OPENING QUESTIONS:

- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LEARN?**
- **WHY IS LEARNING IMPORTANT?**

This week's "L" Ementary fundamental is LEARN.

In the verse above we see part of God's plan for us and more importantly why that matters.

If we are to love the Lord and live a life where God is 1st and others are 2nd, then we must allow God to instruct and teach us in the way we should go to LEARN and grow.

The second verse explains how we are to LEARN, and we can identify four actions that the verse is leading us to do:

1. Meditate or think (God's teaching)
2. Fix eyes (focus on ways of God)
3. Delight or deeply enjoy (statues – God's ways)
4. Not forget (remember the Word of God).

Another way to help us LEARN is through remembering this acronym of the word *LEARN*:

Listen – ears to hear – hiding God's word in our heart – We can review last week's devotional about the importance of listening. For example, LISTENING to our coaches about soccer.

Engage – Fix our eyes on and focus on God. Put Him 1st on and off the soccer field.

Attitude – This is where we truly delight in the Lord and are joyful no matter our circumstances or what happens in our life or during our soccer game. Whether we are winning or losing, we can always control our attitude.

Reflect – We need to take time to meditate or think about God and what he is doing in and through our lives, as well as, read the Bible and take time to think about what God is calling us to do. We also need to take time to think about how we can become better soccer players.

Next Steps – Learning leads to action. The more and more we read God's word and put him first and others 2nd in all we do, the more we will be compelled to love and live a life that is God centered and be able to go joyfully to the places God is leading us.

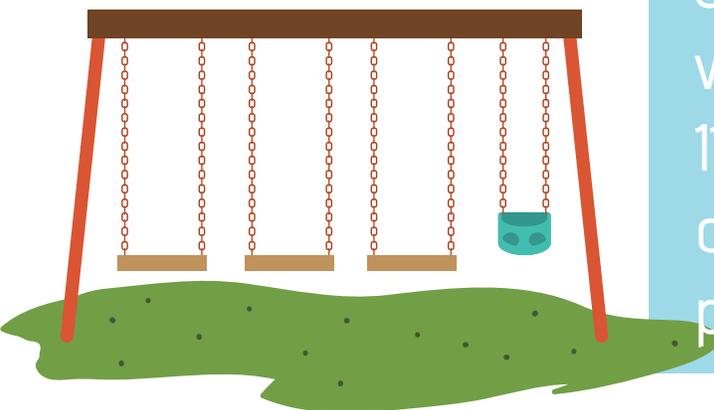
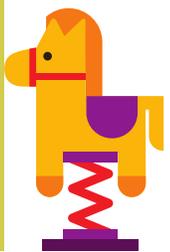
CHALLENGE



Take time this week to LEARN something new about God.



Partner up with a teammate, coach or parent and read a book of the Bible or memorize a verse in the Bible. After you do, take time to follow the steps of LEARNING from this devotional and apply it to what you have LEARNED.



In doing so, you will be committing to hiding God's word in your heart (Psalm 119:11) which is essentially deeply rooted and passionate LEARNING.

GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

4 years-3rd Grade:

- What do you like to LEARN about?
- What are some things you have LEARNED about soccer this season?
- Why is it important to LEARN from your coaches about soccer and about God?
- Has God been teaching you anything during school/soccer? Ex: Patience, kindness etc.

QUESTIONS

4th & Up:

- What are some things you have LEARNED about soccer this season?
- Looking at the acronym which letter in the word LEARN stands out to you? Explain.
- How would your life look different if you were committed to listening and LEARNING from God every single day?



APRIL 18-24

WEEK

SIX

LOSE

MATTHEW 10:39:

Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

EXTRA RESOURCE: MARK 8:34-36

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOSE?**
- **WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM LOSING?**

Why would "LOSE" be one of our "L" Elementary fundamentals for the season?

Shouldn't it be "win" or at least "tie"?

It seems a little backwards for LOSE to be one of our core values.

However, we aren't talking about LOSING or winning a soccer game, we are talking about what it means to LOSE ourselves for the sake of our teammates, our families, friends, others, and of course, God.

Matthew 10:39 is saying that those who find their life by enjoying sinful activities will lose their eternal life on Judgement day. But those who lose out on worldly desires of life for Christ will live in eternity and happiness with him.

In soccer LOSING could simply look like serving our teammates, putting extra work in after practice to make ourselves better, actively listening to our coaches during practice, setting an example for other teammates, not hogging the ball during the game, and/or volunteering to play goalie.

Off the field, this looks like putting God first above all other things as we make time daily to spend with God.

That might mean less time watching TV or playing with your tablet or it could mean sticking up for a classmate in school where you might lose your reputation or "coolness"

By LOSING less important yet tempting things in life, we are giving ourselves to God. As the advice of Jim Elliot, the great missionary once offered "we are no fool to give (LOSE) what we cannot keep, to gain what we cannot LOSE."

CHALLENGE

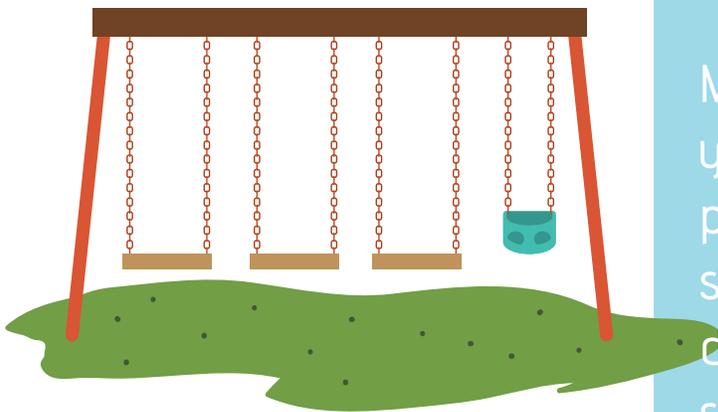


Find a way to give yourself away (“LOSE yourself”) this week.

Perhaps it is spending less time on the computer and more time with your family and/or with God.



Maybe it looks like giving some of your toys or clothes away to people who are in need, helping someone with their homework, doing chores around the house, or something else where you are giving your time and heart to others as you are serving the Lord.

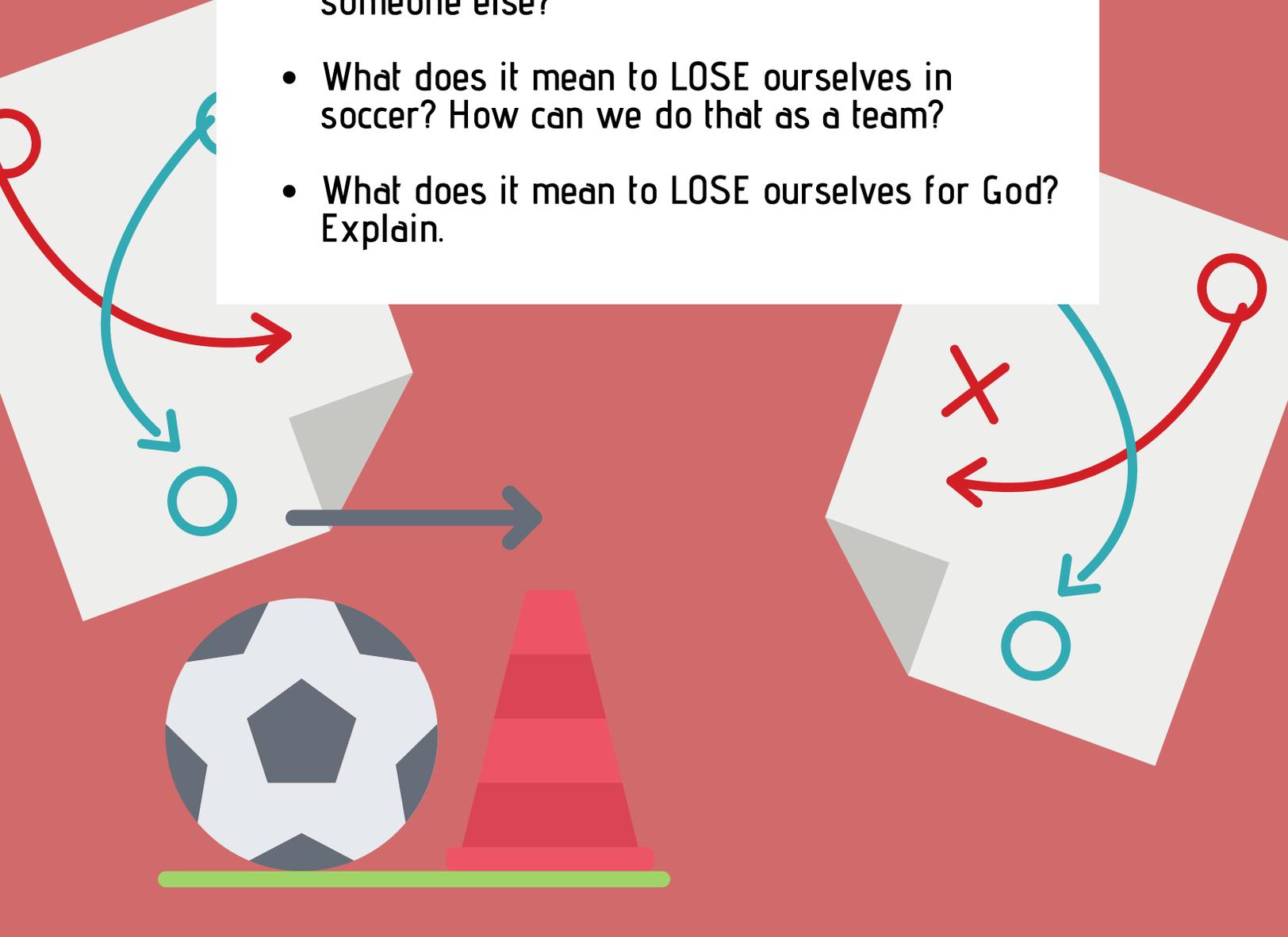


GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

ALL AGES

- What does it mean to LOSE ourselves for someone else?
- What does it mean to LOSE ourselves in soccer? How can we do that as a team?
- What does it mean to LOSE ourselves for God? Explain.





APRIL 25-
MAY 1

WEEK

SEVEN

LEAD

PROVERBS 11:14:

For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisors.

PROVERBS 29:4:

By justice a king gives a country stability, but those who are greedy for bribes tear it down.

EXTRA RESOURCES: PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LEAD?**
- **WHO ARE SOME GREAT LEADERS WITHIN PROFESSIONAL SOCCER AND/OR SPORTS IN GENERAL?**

The next "L" Ementary fundamental is LEAD.

When a coach sees a player LEAD others on the field it brings him great joy. It comforts him knowing that he has someone else who can help encourage and motivate the team. In a similar way God takes much joy when he sees his followers LEAD others by serving and loving them.

We should understand that true LEADERSHIP does not mean for us to be selfish. It means viewing others higher than we view ourselves. LEADING others offers stability and guidance. Without LEADERSHIP, teams, churches, families can start to collapse. Servant LEADERSHIP is another way we can LEAD. This means we serve others, love others, and aid them in meeting their needs to help them succeed. Like in the 1 Am 3rd motto, God First, OTHERS SECOND, I Am Third.

We can study what it means to be a leader by looking at this acronym LEADER:

L – Loves others

E – Encourages their teammates

A – Attentive in everything they do

D – Disciples

E – A good Example

R – Remains on God

Let's take time to look at each word in this acronym and how we can LEAD to love and serve others this week on and off the field. We would all bring God much joy if we loved him by loving, serving, and LEADING others in this way.

CHALLENGE

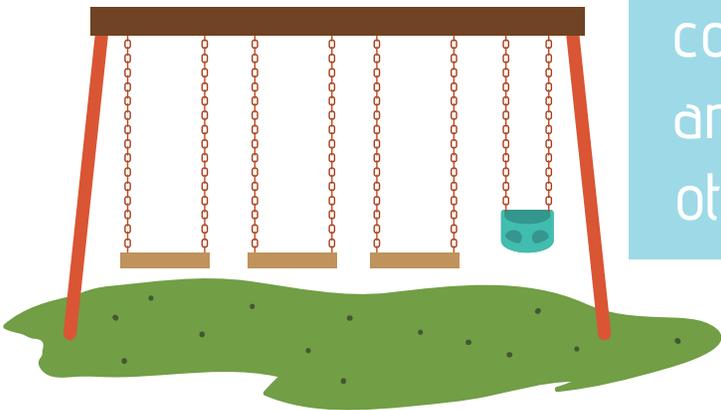


This week look for ways you can LEAD others on and off the field.

You can start by encouraging teammates, friends, or family. Try to motivate one of your teammates when they are feeling frustrated and notice the difference you can make.



Then understand that you are making God's joy complete as you step out and serve, LEAD, and love others.

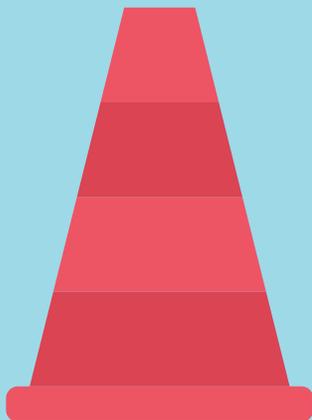


GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

ALL AGES

- Does LEADERSHIP mean we simply tell people what to do? Explain?
- What are some ways we can LEAD others on/off the field?
- What are ways God calls us to LEAD others?
- Who else, besides God, will we bring joy to when we LEAD others?





MAY 2-8

WEEK

EIGHT

LAUGH

PROVERBS 17:22

A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

NEHEMIAH 8:10 (EXCERPT):

“...The joy of the Lord is my strength...”

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- **WHAT MAKES YOU LAUGH?**
- **HOW DO YOU OR YOUR BODY FEEL WHEN YOU LAUGH?**

Laughter is a very important “L” Elementary fundamental. We’re not saying that the other “L” Elementary’s aren’t as important, but without laughter or joy, things like soccer and our relationship with the Lord wouldn’t be as desirable to do or pursue. Laughter seems like a simple, everyday thing we do. But that isn’t always the case. Sometimes we worry about a test in school or messing up a shot on goal. Sometimes we get frustrated with our classmates or teammates. This can take the joy out of school or sports, wouldn’t you agree?

In Proverbs 17:22, Solomon is saying that a merry (happy) heart does great like a medicine. Have you ever felt sick and your mom or dad gave you medicine, and you felt better within minutes? That is what Solomon is talking about here. A happy heart or a laughing heart does good like a medicine. Additionally, in Nehemiah, it describes that “the joy of the Lord is our strength.”

In soccer, it is important to learn skills, play hard and have fun! One way we can have fun is by LAUGHING! Not only does laughter bring us joy and make the activity or the people around us more enjoyable, but like the scripture says it will give you strength! How crazy is that? Laughing doesn’t make you weak, but it can actually bring you strength.

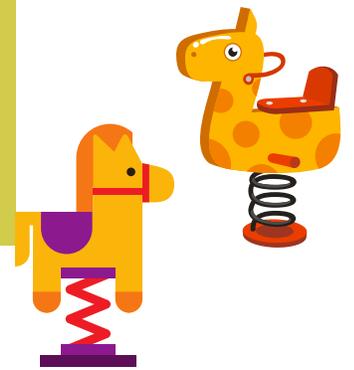
We can all agree that laughter is contagious, and it helps bring people and teams together. God didn’t call us to live on this earth alone. It is important for us to have community (similar to a team or a group of friends). Laughter can play an important role in building community. So as you step onto the field or back into your classroom, remember to bring joy to others because it will not only strengthen you, but also lift others up.



CHALLENGE

Find a way to bring joy to others or make someone laugh this week.

Perhaps you can do this by watching a funny video, telling a silly joke or playing the “HAHA” game with your family (Explanation of game on next page). Maybe it looks like talking to family or friends about a funny thing that has happened to you or them in the past



Whatever it is, make sure to enjoy yourself. For the joy of the Lord is our strength. And remember, it will not only strengthen you but others around you.



GAME

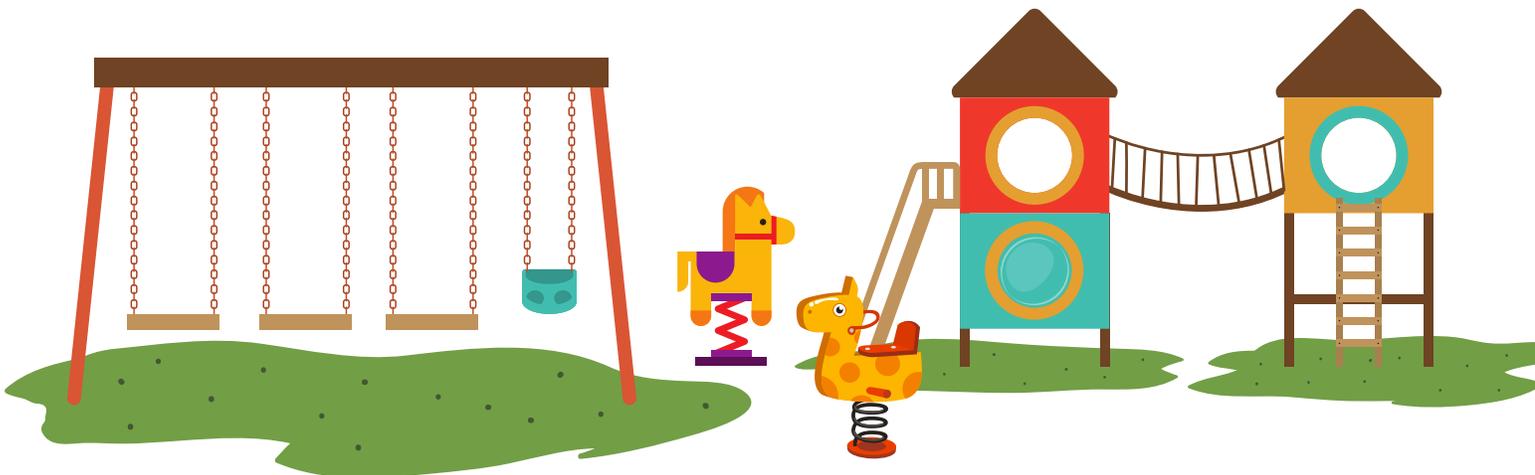


This game can be played with as little as 2 people or even your team. We recommend it be played with 3-4. Anyway, how it is played is:

Player 1 (PL1), Player 2 (PL2) will go back and forth saying “HA” to each other, but as you exchange “HA’s” each player will add an additional “HA” every time.

Example: PL1 – HA! PL2 – HA, HA! PL1 – HA, HA, HA!, PL2 – HA, HA, HA, HA!

The goal is to not be the first person to start truly laughing. See how many “HA’s” you can reach. At the end of the game, you and your family should be laughing.

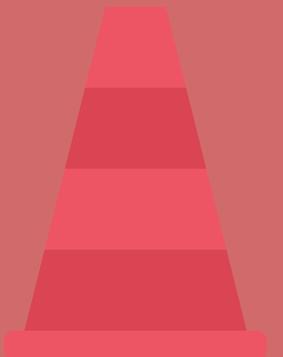


GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

ALL AGES

- What makes soccer fun?
- How do you think LAUGHTER or JOY can bring you strength?
- How can we bring LAUGHTER or JOY to others?





MAY 9-15
WEEK

NINE

LIGHT

JOHN 8:12:

Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- DO YOU FEEL SAFE IN A ROOM THAT IS DARK WITH ALL THE LIGHTS OFF?
- HOW ABOUT WHEN YOU TURN A LIGHT ON?

The next "L"Elementary fundamental is LIGHT. In John 8:12, Jesus tells us he is the LIGHT of the world and whoever follows him will live in LIGHT not darkness. By glorifying God and having a good relationship with him we can live in the LIGHT. However if we follow worldly temptations we can wander into darkness and sin.

Think about what happens when you turn on a lamp in a dark room, it becomes LIGHT! That lamp is like Jesus. Some people live in the darkness with sin. That is when we have to show them Jesus so that they can see the joy and LIGHT God brings into our lives. You can be like a flashlight and shine LIGHT into their lives by telling them about Jesus.

As a Christian we need to keep our flashlight on. We can shine our LIGHT by praying with our teammates before practices and games or by telling a friend at school about Jesus. When you turn your flashlight off you are choosing sin. We have to let our LIGHT shine so that we can glorify God.



CHALLENGE

Be a LIGHT to someone at school or on your team this week.



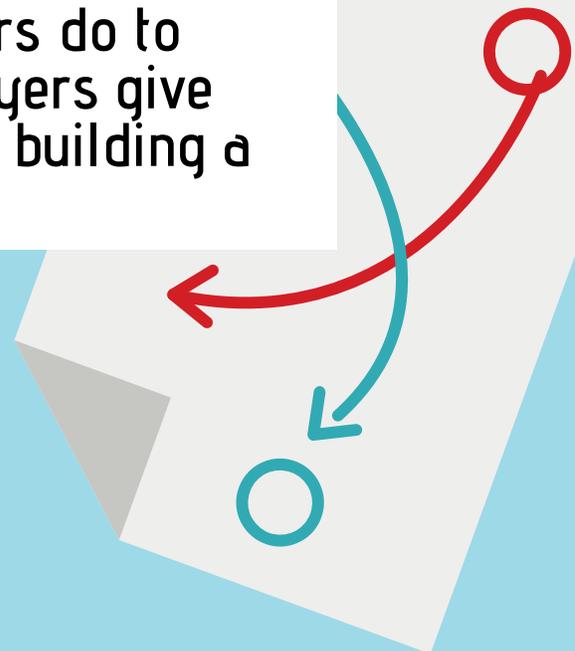
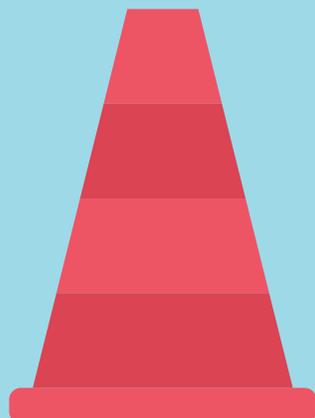
For example, compliment a player on your team or tell someone about the amazing things Jesus does in our lives.

GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

ALL AGES

- What are ways you can be LIGHT in someone's life?
- What are some examples of "turning your light off" towards others? Ex: Saying something mean to a teammate.
- Who is someone who has shined LIGHT into your life?
- What do pro soccer players do to shine their LIGHT? Ex: Players give back to the community by building a school or church.





MAY 16-22
WEEK

TEN

LET GO & LET GOD

1 PETER 5:7:

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

PROVERBS 3: 5-6:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths.

OPENING QUESTIONS:

- **WAS THERE EVER A TIME IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU WERE ANXIOUS OR WORRIED? EXPLAIN.**
- **WHAT DID YOU DO TO HELP CALM YOURSELF DOWN?**

LET GO and LET GOD is one of our final “L”Elementary fundamentals. It can be easy to get caught up in daily tasks. When we find ourselves in a moment of distress or worry, we need to remember to LET GO and LET GOD handle it.

In 1 Peter 5:7 and in Proverbs 3: 5-6, it’s telling us to hand all of our worries over to God because he is here to be our guide in life. LETTING GO and LETTING GOD may be intimidating, but we need to remember that we can’t handle anything without him. Can you think of a time where you were worried or stressed? These are the moments we need to hand those concerns over to the Lord and let Him help us walk through those times. God knows what he is doing, and as Believers we should be able to trust him no matter the situation.

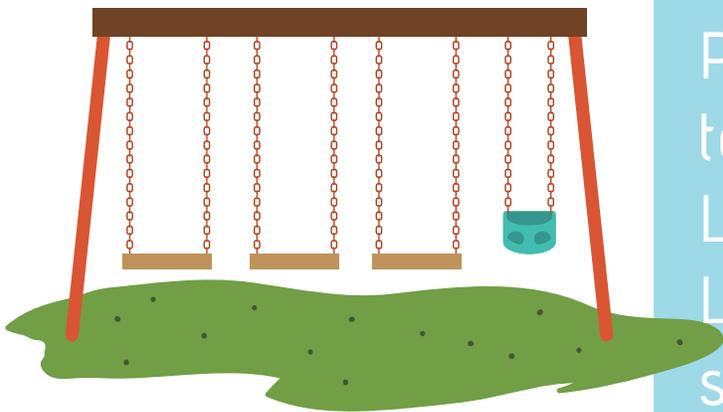
Life can get very chaotic at times, and some of us may be going through a stressful period. Trying to stay healthy, keeping up with family/friends, or whatever may be going on in your life can be overwhelming. But that is why during those times, your main focus needs to be to LET GO and LET GOD.

CHALLENGE



Whenever you are feeling overwhelmed, immediately think LET GO and LET GOD. Whether you are stressed about a practice, a game, school, or anything else, remember that God can help your situation.

He will steer you in the right direction. Our challenge to you this week is to spend some time with God and hand your concerns/worries over to him.



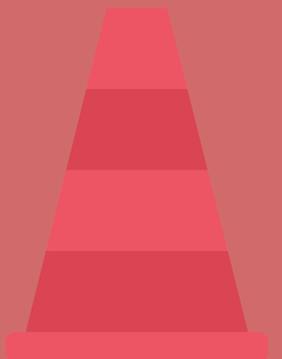
Part two to this challenge is to remind someone else to LET GO of their worries and LET GOD handle their situation. It can be a family member, a friend, or even a teammate.

GAMECHANGER

QUESTIONS

ALL AGES:

- Have you ever prayed during times of trouble?
- How will your life improve when you LET GO and LET GOD?
- How can LETTING GO and LETTING GOD help us as a soccer player?
- After your tough situation has passed, how will you praise God?



TO OUR PARTNERS:



**WHITE
GREER
MAGGARD**
ORTHODONTICS

**CENTENARY**

