

Veritas Devotions
God's Game Plan¹

- 1st Practice—Getting to Know each other and Intro
 - Spend 1-2 minutes letting each child share his or her name and their favorite sport or team
 - Spend 1-2 minutes introducing the devotions for this season.
 - In sports, coaches try to have a game plan. Do you know what a game plan is? A game plan is the things a team needs to do to play well and hopefully win the game.
Did you know that God has a game plan for our lives? This season we will learn about God's plan for us while we learn more about basketball and have fun playing.
- 2nd Practice—God Makes His Team
 - “God created the world to show how amazing He is. The crashing ocean waves show God's power. Colorful flowers show us God's beauty. Playful puppies show us God's joy. But God made one creature to show his greatness more than anything else. Can you guess which of God's creations that is?”
 - People! The Bible says God made people different than everything else he made.
 - “So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female.” (Genesis 1:27)
 - “God made people in His image or likeness. When you look in a mirror you see your reflection. What you see in the mirror is not you. It is an image that looks like you. We are not God, but God made us so that when the world looks at us, they see a little of what God is like. God created people to show His greatness or His glory. God made amazing you to show the world how amazing He is.
- 3rd Practice—God's Plan for His Team
 - God gave people rules for how to live in this world He made. God's rules show that He is a loving, good, and wise God. When we obey God's rules, we live joyful lives doing what God created us to do—show His glory.
 - God made the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, to show what He was like. He gave them rules to live by. These rules were not to keep them from fun things, but to keep them safe and let them live a good life! God even walked with them every day. They knew God so well! They talked with Him!
 - Ask: Do you know any rules that God gave? Is it easy to keep God's rules?
 - Note: You can talk through some of the 10 commandments if the kids need help thinking of God's rules.
 - You shall have no other God's before me.
 - You shall not make for yourself an idol.
 - You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

¹ Adapted from NAMB's “God's Special Plan for Children” <https://www.namb.net/resource/gods-special-plan-for-children/>.

- Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
 - Honor your father and your mother.
 - You shall not murder.
 - You shall not commit adultery.
 - You shall not steal.
 - You shall not lie.
 - You shall not covet.
- 4th Practice—God’s Team Messes Up!
 - Adam and Eve obeyed God’s rules...for a while. But one day, they listened to some lies and they disobeyed God’s rules. Immediately, their friendship with God was broken. They could not walk and talk with God any more.
 - We do not obey God’s rules. We often do the things God tells us not to do, and we do not do the things God tells us to do. We disobey God. The Bible calls this sin.
 - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)
 - All of us sin. We do not show God’s glory like He created us to do.
 - Ask (if time allows): **Can you think of ways that you sin and disobey God?**
 - Sin is a big problem, not only because it keeps us from doing what God created us to do but because sin must be punished.
 - For the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23a) We deserve to be punished for our sin, and the punishment we deserve is death— being separated from God forever.
- 5th Practice—God’s Team Has a Big Problem
 - Last week we talked about sin. Sin is a big problem for us. It separates us from God, and it hurts us.
 - Sin causes lots of problems in our loves and the lives of everyone on earth. People try to fix these problems by themselves.
 - Some people try to be really good. They think if they do good things, then good things will happen to them. But God’s Word tells us that even our good deeds are like old, dirty clothes in God’s eyes.
 - Other people try to distract themselves from what is hurting them. They might think if they get enough friends, have enough money, or are really good at sports then they won’t have so many problems. They might feel better for a little while, but just like a stretched out rubber band always snaps back, their problems already come back.
 - People cannot fix this big problem. We can try so hard to fix our problems or to get back to God, but we cannot do it ourselves. We need someone to save us!
- 6th Practice—God’s Great Rescue Plan
 - **God loves people.**
 - He knew people would sin before He even created them, and He had a plan to rescue them. God’s plan is Jesus! Jesus is God’s one and only Son. Jesus came to earth as a person. While Jesus lived on earth, He never

sinned—not one time. Jesus showed the world what God is like more than anyone who has ever lived because He is God.

- Jesus showed God’s love to the world by taking the punishment for our sin when He died on the cross. But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8) Jesus did not stay dead. God raised Jesus from the dead, and He is alive today. Through Jesus’ death and resurrection, God made the way to give us life.
- 7th Practice—Accepting God’s Rescue Plan
 - Have you ever made a trade? Maybe you traded toys with a friend or traded snacks with a classmate? Through His death and resurrection, Jesus made a trade with people. He took people’s sin on Himself and gave them His righteousness. Righteousness is a big word that means goodness or holiness. Because of Jesus, God will forgive our sin, and when He looks at us, He will not see our sin anymore. Instead, He will see the perfect sinless life of His Son. “He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - How can we have this life with God that Jesus earned for us and God wants to give us? By believing in Jesus! For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16) Life with God is not something we can earn. It is a gift. All we bring to Jesus is our need. We show we believe in Jesus as we turn away from our sin and turn to Him. “The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23b)
 - Have you ever put your trust in Jesus to save you from your sin? Do you have any questions about what we have been talking about? Do you think you may be ready to trust in Jesus now? Why don’t you talk to God about this? We talk to God through prayer. You can pray out loud or quietly in your head. Just tell God what is going on in your heart right now. Do not worry about saying the right thing. You may want to write out part of your prayer on the blank lines.
- 8th Practice—Living by God’s Game Plan
 - Welcome to God’s team! If you decided to turn from your sin and trust in Jesus to save you, you are now a Christian! Becoming a Christian is the most important decision you will make in your life.
 - As a Christian, you get the forgiveness of sin, Jesus’ help in your daily life, and the eternal life that God promises. But God gives you even more! You are now a child of God. “See what great love the Father has given us that we should be called God’s children—and we are!” (1 John 3:1a)
 - The Holy Spirit of God now lives in you to help you live for Him. “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.” (John 14:26)
 - Nothing can separate you from God’s love. “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing

will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39)

- As soon as you become a Christian, God begins the process of making you more and more like Jesus. We get to join God in this work He is doing in us by doing things that help us grow in love for Him. Here are some things you can do to help you love God more.
 - Read the Bible
 - God gives us His words in the Bible. All of God’s words are true. Begin by reading just a few verses or one chapter a day. The Book of Mark is a great place to start.
 - Pray
 - Prayer is simply talking to God. We can talk to God about anything and at any time. He wants to hear from you!
 - Be a part of a Church.
 - God knows being a Christian in this sinful world is not easy. He gives us other people who believe in Jesus to help us. In church, we learn more about God, we are reminded about what is true, and we can ask other believers to pray for us when we sin or have other problems. “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 3:18a)
 - We show people we have believed in Jesus and are a part of His team by being Baptized. Being Baptized is a picture of what God has done by saving you. Once you’ve given Jesus your life and let Him into your heart, baptism is your next step! When people get baptized, they get dipped in and out of a pool of water. It’s a sign to let people know they have allowed Jesus to wash them clean from sin.
 - Did you know even Jesus got baptized? Read about it in Matthew chapter 3! Whenever we do the things that Jesus did, it makes God happy.
 - “Then a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with Him.’” —Matthew 3:17, CEV