



HG SPORTS

A Ministry of Hickory Grove Baptist Church



**“THE GOSPEL
PLAN”**

TEAM DEVOTIONAL
BOOK

HG SPORTS MISSION:

We desire to become one of the best sports outreach ministries through EXALTING CHRIST by sharing His story, by MAKING DISCIPLES through Gospel-Centered Training and PASSING THE TORCH by sending out sports missionaries.

We hope this book helps guide you through “[The Gospel Plan](#)” as taught in the Bible. We are highlighting 5 core truths of God’s Gospel. Each week will have a verse, a description of the core truth and some questions to help you think deeper.

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WEEK 1

GOD RULES

GOD RULES AS CREATOR AND SUSTAINER OF ALL THINGS

Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God **created the heavens and the earth.**”

Revelation 4:11 “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for **you created all things, and by your will they existed** and were created.”

Before we try to understand God or what it means to be a Christian, we must first understand that God is the Creator. Look around you at the dirt and grass. See the sun shining (or clouds forming!) and hear the birds calling. God created all of this just by speaking! But, God also did far more than just create everything. He is the one who keeps it all working. Did you know that if the earth was just slightly closer to the sun everything would burn up, and if it was slightly further away we would all freeze?! God is the one who ensures the entire universe works in a way so we can live. Without God nothing would exist and without God nothing would work. Since He is the one who created and sustains us, He is the one to whom we should honor with our lives!

WEEK 1 QUESTIONS:

How can you give God glory and Honor?

What things have you made? How long did it take, what materials did you use, How difficult was it? Compare that to God creating the world in 7 days only by speaking.

WEEK 2

GOD RULES

GOD RULES FOR HIS OWN GLORY

Acts 17:26-27 “And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth ... **that they should seek God**, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us.”

As we continue to think about God as the Creator we have to ask, why would God create us? The answer is given all throughout the Bible. God created us so that we might glorify him. But remember, God didn't create just us, He also created all the plants, animals, dirt, and even the games we play! All of his creation was good and it was given to us as a gift so that we might want to glorify Him. Think about when you get a gift from a friend or parent. Do you love your video game system, baseball glove, or new bike more than your parents? Of course you don't. However, we made a big mistake with the gifts God gave us. We saw all the really good gifts God gave us and instead of saying, “Thank you God for loving me!” we said, “Wow, I'm pretty awesome if God gave me all this stuff!” We choose to glorify ourselves instead of glorifying God.

WEEK 2 QUESTIONS:

What are some ways we glorify ourselves instead of God?

Think about some things you have made. What would you do if the thing you made didn't work the way you wanted?

WEEK 3

WE SINNED

*WE SIN BY DISOBEYING GOD AND OUR
DISOBEDIENCE DESERVES PUNISHMENT*

Romans 3:23 “for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 6:23 “For the **wages of sin is death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The word the Bible uses for sin means “to miss the mark”. It was used of archery competitions when the shooter missed the bullseye. Unfortunately we do even more than miss the mark, we shoot at the wrong target! God set a mark for us as we saw last week; *glorify Him* through obedience with our life. However, we all sin in that *we glorify ourselves* with our life. We missed God’s mark by disobeying Him. Consequently, just as our parents punish us when we disobey, God will punish us for disobeying him. Since God is perfect, disobedience against him requires a perfect punishment which is death. This bad news is what makes the Gospel such good news. Just as it must rain first in order to see a rainbow, we must understand that we sin everyday and deserve punishment from God before we can be excited about Jesus and life!

WEEK 3 QUESTIONS:

Why do you think that the punishment for sin is so harsh?

In what ways do you care more about yourself than about what God wants?

WEEK 4

WE SINNED

WE SIN BY OUR OWN CHOICE

John 3:19 “And this is the judgement: the light has come into the world, and **people loved the darkness rather than the light** because their works were evil.”

Last week we defined sin as disobeying God, or “missing the mark”. Since we’ve sinned we deserves God’s punishment, which is death. This might sound harsh or unloving of God. We think so because we see sin as an accident. We didn’t mean to disobey. But the Bible gives us a different story. The Bible teaches that our “works are evil”, we “loved the darkness”, and our “hearts are deceitful”. God’s punishment against sin *is* harsh because 1) He is perfect and 2) we sin on purpose! This does not mean every sin we commit is on purpose, but it means the reason we sin often is because our hearts love to sin. Our hearts trick our minds into thinking that sin is fun. So we choose sin instead of choosing to obey God. This is the reason why we need a “Savior”. We can’t change the desire of our heart on our own, but God promises to give us a new heart when we trust in Jesus! This new heart will lead us to worship God. Instead of tricking us into disobeying God.

WEEK 4 QUESTIONS:

How does our sinful hearts keep us constantly disobeying God?

Describe a time when you disobeyed your parents, even when you knew it was wrong.

WEEK 5

GOD PROVIDED

GOD PROVIDED JESUS TO FIX WHAT WE BROKE

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that **he gave his only son**, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

“But God” are two of the greatest words in the Bible. Let me tell you why. Our hearts are the problem in this world. Our hearts lead us into sin and there’s nothing we can do to fix them! Our sin means we deserve punishment of death. *BUT GOD* decided to provide Jesus to fix the problem we created. Look at our verse; the great problem we face is death. *BUT GOD “gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish”*. God knew that only Jesus could meet God’s standard. Remember when God created humans he demanded perfect obedience? Well Jesus is the only human to ever live an entire life and never disobey God. Jesus never sinned even once! That is what we call a righteous life. When we believe in Jesus as Savior and King, he gives us his righteous life. That means the perfect life he lived he doesn’t keep for himself, but gave to us! So when God looks at those who belief He doesn’t see the bad sinful life; He sees a perfect life.

WEEK 5 QUESTIONS:

Think about a time when you made a mistake but someone else helped you fix it.

What does it tell us about God if he was willing to fix what we broke?

WEEK 6

GOD PROVIDED

GOD PROVIDED JESUS AS A FREE GIFT IN HIS GRACE

Ephesians 2:8-9 “For **by grace** you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; **it is the gift of God**, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Jesus’ perfect life is given to all who believe in him, and therefore they no longer have to fear God’s punishment for sin. That is the Good News we saw last week... and it gets even better this week! Most of the time when we get something good it is because we worked hard to earn it. We win the game because we practiced hard. We get an A on the test because we studied. But the gift of Jesus is completely different. Jesus doesn’t give us his righteous life because of anything we do. We can’t do enough good things to make Jesus give us His life. Those deceitful hearts we have keep causing us to sin remember?! So, God provided Jesus as a FREE gift to all who believe. By giving us Jesus as a gift it prevents us from thinking we did anything to earn our new life. By giving us Jesus as a gift it leads us to worship God even more, because we know we deserve death for our sin but get life in Jesus.

WEEK 6 QUESTIONS:

Why is life in Jesus a free gift? Why can’t we do anything to earn God’s free gift?

Think about a time you received a gift from someone. How did it make you feel about the person who gave it to you?

WEEK 7

JESUS GIVES

JESUS GIVES US HIMSELF AS A SACRIFICE

Romans 5:8 “but God showed his love for us in that while we were still sinners, **Christ died for us.**”

When God created man His plan was for us to live forever. We ruined this plan by sinning, or disobeying God. The reason plants, animals, and we humans die is as a punishment from God for that disobedience. That is the bad news that makes Jesus so good. Jesus never sinned, and therefore could have lived forever on earth. However, he gave up his life so that we could live. Another way to say it is that Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice. A sacrifice is when one person willingly gives up what they have in order to help someone else. Jesus wasn't supposed to die because he never sinned. Yet, Jesus willingly died the death we deserve and gave us the life He lived. The craziest part of this exchange is that Jesus sacrificed himself even though we hated Him as sinners. He didn't make us earn his sacrifice through good behavior; Jesus sacrificed his life even though we hated him.

WEEK 7 QUESTIONS:

How does Jesus' sacrifice for us sinners show God's love for us?

Have you been punished for something someone else did? How did it make you feel?

WEEK 8

JESUS GIVES

*JESUS GIVES US HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS AND
TAKES OUR SIN*

2 Corinthians 5:21 “For our sake he made **him to be sin**
who knew no sin, so that in him **we**
might become the righteousness of
God.”

Trades are part of sports. Ask your parents and they can tell you about some really bad trades teams have made. When Babe Ruth was young the Boston Red Sox traded him to the Yankees. And he went on to be one of the best homerun hitters of all time! But there was never a trade as uneven as the trade Jesus made with us. Jesus lived a perfect life and earned eternal life by obeying God. We have death waiting for us after a life of disobedience against God. But Jesus loved us enough to make a trade; *The Great Trade*. Jesus traded us his perfect life and he took our sinner's death. That's a great trade for us and a terrible trade for Jesus. But, He did it because he loves us so much. All we have to do to make the trade official is believe in Jesus and live our life to glorify Him! Then when God looks at us, He sees Jesus' perfect life; and when God looks at Jesus, He sees the death we should have died. What a *Great Trade* indeed!

WEEK 8 QUESTIONS:

*Have you ever traded anything with a friend?
How did you decide what was fair?*

*Why did Jesus willingly make such an uneven
trade with us?*

WEEK 9

WE RESPOND

*WE RESPOND WITH REPENTANCE OF SIN AND
BELIEF IN JESUS*

Romans 10:9 “if you **confess with your mouth** that Jesus is
Lord and **believe in your heart** that God raised
him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Last week we talked about that *Great Trade* where Jesus
takes our sinner’s death and we get His perfect life. Here we
see exactly how to make that trade happen! Jesus doesn’t
make the trade with everyone but only with those who
respond with repentance of sin and belief in Jesus.

Repentance of sin means that we’re sorry for our sin and
start to hate it because it displeases God. Belief in Jesus
means we trust Jesus alone to make this trade and we
glorify him with all of our thoughts, words, and actions. If
we do these two things then Jesus makes the trade and we
get his perfect life! Jesus even throws in a bonus. When we
get his perfect life, we also get his Holy Spirit that will help
us to understand the Bible and help us to live a life that
glorifies Him!

WEEK 9 QUESTIONS:

*How does it make you feel when a friend does
something nice for you?*

*Describe a time when you had a coach, teacher,
parent, or friend help you with something you
couldn’t do.*

WEEK 10

WE RESPOND

WE RESPOND BY TELLING OTHERS ABOUT JESUS

Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and **make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

The Great Trade is an event we never get to forget. If we respond with repentance and belief like we talked about last week it should change the way we live our life. The biggest way it should change our life is that Jesus becomes the person we talk about the most! We learned how all mankind is to be punished with death for sin. Trading our punishment for Jesus' life is the only hope. It is then our responsibility to make sure everyone we know hears about Jesus and the *Great Trade* he offers. When we tell someone about Jesus, and they believe, it's called making a disciple. In the verse Jesus tells all people who believe in Him that he expects them to tell everyone about the *Great Trade* He offers! Notice, too who Jesus expects us to tell, “*all nations*”. What He means is everyone we know. It doesn't matter where they live or who they are, everyone in the world needs to hear about *The Great Trade* Jesus offers. Without hearing they can never repent or believe.

WEEK 10 QUESTIONS:

Think about the best present you ever received. How did you react when you opened it? Who did you tell?

*Can you name 3 people in your life that have not heard of or don't believe in Jesus? How can you tell them about *The Great Trade*?*
