

Global Soccer Ministries International



Coaching Education Leadership Development

**Leadership & Discipling
in the Game of Football**

By

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LEADERSHIP & DISCIPLING IN THE GAME of FOOTBALL

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – Part 1

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU”.....Paul Banta

ONLY LEAD AND DISCIPLE THOSE THE LORD LEADS YOU TOO.

A Christian coach who has declared to be a leader/disciple needs a vital, very personal, growing relationship with the Living Father. Being an effective leader/disciple is hard; doing life without the Lord leading you is impossible. The best Coach is a truth teller, so know the Person, who is Truth.

How do you let the Lord lead you to disciple others? You must intentionally build your relationship with Him just like any real trustworthy friendship. How do you develop a friendship? You meet someone, get to know them, ask questions, tell them about yourself, spend time with them and include them in your daily life. It's no different with your friendship with God and His Son. The difference is that He won't force His way into your life; you must willingly invite Him to be your Forever Friend.

“Leadership and Discipleship are a relationship that helps influence others. When leadership is being exercised, one person is seeking to influence the vision, values, attitudes, or behaviors of another. Leading is not about position; it is not about a person. Leadership is always a relationship between a leader and a follower — a relationship in which both person lead and both follow. Both participants in a relationship of leadership exercise leadership both seek to influence the other. Everyone leads at one time or another as each person seeks to influence the vision, values, beliefs or behaviors of those around them based on biblical principles.”

A BIBLICAL MODEL OF DISCIPLESHIP and LEADERSHIP

We need to believe and understand that to disciple others are ultimately expressed through the life and words of Jesus as expressed in the Bible. We need to take the view presented in Philippians 2 that Jesus came to this world to demonstrate the character of God. In doing so, He demonstrated the highest form of discipleship that was the leadership provided by being a servant. Jesus can seek, serve, heals and save other so they would be able to disciple following His example.

Philippians 2:1-7 says, "Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort provided by love, any fellowship in the Spirit, any affection or mercy, complete my joy and be of the same mind, by having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one purpose. Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or our personal vanity each of you should in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. Each of you should be concerned not only about your interests, but about the interests of

others as well. You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death—even the death of the cross!" Verse 6 suggests that a better translation might be "precisely because He was God, He became a servant". Thus, it is the essential nature of God to be a servant, not an exception to His nature.

WE NEED THAT SERVANT HUMILITY TO DISCIPLE

(Matthew 28:18-20; John 20:21-23; Matthew 16:18-19; 18:18-20.) What does it mean to act in the name of Christ? Only when we act according to the mind of Christ do we act with His authority; this attitude precludes doing anything merely to enhance our position or prestige. Christ's Spirit will always be reminding us, "You are a servant of servants; you can do enormous good if you don't care about getting credit for it." Servant Leadership, as thus described, is not about power or position, although it can be present in one who has power as well as position. Rather, it is about a life modeled after the life of Jesus Christ, Who lived for the express purpose of serving others. One of the fundamental concepts is that we take on the characteristics God and become such a humble servant that we will want to disciple others and lead by biblical example, so they one day do the same. The Father, in Christ, demonstrates this aspect of His character in sending Jesus to be our Model, as well as our Savior. Jesus Himself said this about Himself Matthew 20:26-28 and Matthew 23:11-12.

Matthew 20: 26-28 says, "It must not be this way among you! Instead whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (The NET Bible)

Matthew 23:11-12 says, "The greatest among you will be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

The word slave is interpreted as a bondservant or one who pledges himself or herself in servitude to another.

Christian coaches who disciple their players do not have any personally acquired authority or special power. They find that the Holy Spirit is their source of strengths. We become a mere instrument or vessel of Christ for what we are called to do in His name. We need to know more about the life and character of Jesus following His example as we lead our players. Servant leaders are one with their community.

They listen, honor, trust, help and encourage others treating them with dignity and respect.

This model of leadership is a radical one because it represents a dramatic return to what we believe are the original Heaven-defined concept of leadership and a departure from the egocentric concept that seems to pervade current secular thinking. In a world where power and position rule the idea of Christian leadership, as defined within, is difficult to understand and even more difficult to convey

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 2

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU”.....Paul Banta

INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF SOCCER

What is this integrity in my life all about?

Let's start this out by what we have defined integrity to be about.

Possession of firm principles: the quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to high moral principles, professional standards and being a coach/leader that is filled with integrity/honesty.

Completeness: the state of being complete or undivided or God's got your attention.

Wholeness: the state of being of sound mind and work on living their life Biblically.

A lack of integrity in societies leads to a lack of integrity in our lives and then into our coaching. If you're going to coach, you must be a person of integrity. Look around you'll see of lack of it all around you. You may even be trapped by the lack of integrity and dishonesty. If you have a lack of integrity and drifting aimlessly through life and coaching the game and are not serious about the result, you're required to achieve in the game you don't belong in the game. We need to be, as coaches, filled with integrity because you'll revolutionize the game the way God intended you to be in it.

What are some examples of integrity?

Coaches would like to think that they have some integrity, but if you only have some you're simply not filled with integrity. If you good for awhile and then bad for awhile, you've got a major problem. The old saying "Your sins will find you out is so true". It's either 100%, or you're a zero where integrity is a concern. How are you working on getting filled with integrity? Work is required.....

Those in our society and those in the game would like to have you believe that integrity is not all that important. Being a person of integrity your characteristic will be love, joy, peace, patient, kindness, grace, mercy, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Wow!

These characteristics create a picture of how you need to think, speak and show your actions and react to your players and so they can receive what you're about and how you fit into their vision of you as a coach that will be honest with them individually and the team.

YOU MUST GO BEYOND WINNING MATCHES

If you were designed to coach, you were also designed to go beyond just winning. I call it "Going Beyond the Game." Coaches must go beyond the match. Winning and losing

has a very little impact on the game with most players. I believe that if you coach by the higher standard from God's characteristics of integrity and not the world standards we often forced to live in your players will trust you and commit to you. God wants you to be a winner....not a loser. He doesn't want to work losers on His team. He'll take the loser, like you and me, and make them into BIG TIME WINNERS.

Integrity is modeling Christ with the personality and characteristics He gave you through your speech and actions. You will be able to coach better and even get to be a smarter person. Every coach likes to be looked up to and seen as someone of worth that develops successful players. We this happens and you are filled with integrity you become a person of significance.

NO ONE WILL TRUST YOU IF YOU DON'T HAVE INTEGRITY

If you don't have integrity or a lack of it, expect your players not to trust you. They'll struggle to figure out who you are and what you stand for that could make a difference in their life. A lot of coaches like this type of separation and they want players in the dark about them; guessing who they are, what they mean. This only causes confusion for your players. I can tell you it's not healthy for them, the team, and your leadership. In the end, you're the loser.

Your position with your players is to bring something into their game and lives that's in sync and something that will benefit them....not your selfness. If you have integrity your players want to be around you, follow you and in time give 100% to you. The more players that want to be hearing you, believing in you and working for you will give a team BIG TIME SUCCESS.

PRACTICING BEING A COACH OF INTEGRITY GETS RESULTS

If you're struggling with integrity and you believe you need changes surrender yourself and your heart to be that person who wants to be filled with integrity as much as possible. The more you practice, the better you be. It's not different that repeating training methods you ask of your players. Repetition works and even for integrity. If you mean business and ask your Father in heaven, He'll put you on the right course correction in your life and coaching. He'll teach you what integrity for you is from Biblical standards and He'll use your coaching to win more matches and the lives of your players.

You'll find it much easier and less frustrating to learn to let God become the administrator of your dreams, visions, goals and actions for you and your players. God love dreamers.

Proverb 3:5-6 says, "Trust the Lord God with all your heart and don't lean on your understanding. If you do this, He will make your paths (life) straight".

INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF FOOTBALL

Since God created the game, He wants us in the game be 100% serious and give 100% to the game. This is His plan, and it's always been this way. If you do this daily and early in your coaching career the better and put integrity 100% into your plans, decisions, and

actions, and you're really serious, He'll bless you and your players through the love you have for the game and Him. God's looking for good coaches who want to be great.

He's not looking for the smartest person, the best looking or the most articulate coach. He's looking for a person who's willing to do the work and get the job done. He needs your help, and that's why He created you to do it only with integrity. Work at it, and you'll find out what I mean.....

Leading with Integrity is required! Do You Have It?

If you're committed to using your passion and purpose to serve the Lord through your coaching and want to be successful at it, God requires integrity. So we need to look at what integrity is all about and why we can't coach without it.

God wants you to be passionate about serving Him, but if you don't have integrity He can't let you coach for Him. Sure, you might keep your job and have some worldly success, but you'll have no success for Christ in your coaching.

Integrity is hard to come by these days. I think we know that we live in a world that lacks leadership with integrity at all levels. The newspapers, billboards, TV, radio, news reports, and the Internet reflect the times in which we're living. With so much negativism and garbage constantly bombarding our eyes and ears, we don't always make correct choices to be the coaches of integrity we should be. We simply have a lack of integrity in our lives, and we often fly with life and our coaching without doing anything to become filled with integrity.

Gaining integrity will bring about a revolution in our lives for serving Christ. Take, for instance, dishonesty. It taints the world around us, and we get caught up in it. A lot of Christian men find themselves trapped into maintaining publicly that they are men of integrity, but they only wink at integrity as a barometer to guide them. They are entrapped by their very natures—that of men and women who are just not who they are supposed to be before God. I'll bet that if you think about it long enough, you can remember an occasion in the last several days when you were in a position to compromise your honesty. Did you? Were you guilty of stuffing that hotel towel in your bag on a road trip? Or did you give it to a referee beyond what the guy really deserved, even though he needed a new pair of glasses?

Maybe you were tough enough to do it with integrity. If so, then you honored God. If not, you honored the Devil, and your choice was poor. Integrity is not very highly valued these days, as seen by its very lack of our culture. Parts of our society just don't see that it's all that important to live with integrity. It's almost as though it has become easier to live without it. We are being deceived. God's plan for you is not going to happen unless you know what integrity is, practice its meaning, and use it in your coaching.

WHAT DOES A PERSON OF INTEGRITY LOOK LIKE?

A person of integrity follows what Galatians 5:22–23a says, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

These must be your spiritual passions. They create a picture of the way you speak, act, and react with your players. Throughout this chapter of Galatians, it's plain to see that each of us is empowered by the Holy Spirit to be a person of integrity. Our very nature needs to represent the integrity of our Savior.

Galatians 5:10 says, "I am confident that you will take no other view."

In our commitment to coaching, what matters is that we have a faith strong enough to be filled with integrity to serve with passion. Coaching goes beyond winning matches. We coach players, impacting their lives for His pleasure and eternal rewards for them and us. Winning or losing matches has very little to do with impacting the world. If you win games for any other reasons, it's not through the integrity God expects you to use.

Integrity is a personal state of completeness. Integrity means honesty. If you have integrity, you'll be trusted by your players and they'll commit to you.

When you have integrity, what comes out of your mouth matches up to your actions! The world in which we live lacks leaders who are people of integrity. If you can coach with integrity based on God's standards, you will not be operating by the world's standards. A coach who is full of integrity coaches by a system that is God-centered. When integrity is the "official" of your coaching, you will be consistent, and your God-honoring beliefs will be reflected in your words and your walk. Integrity gives you the freedom to be the complete coach God wants you to be.

INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF FOOTBALL

If you're not a person of integrity, you're probably coaching dishonestly. God can't use you to serve Him if you remain a dishonest coach, a thief, a cheater, a hater, a jealous man, a person who twists the truth, and so on. Do you ever give in to any of the above when coaching? I did, and I was out of line. How about admitting you need to reboot your personal computer and start using integrity in your practice sessions, matches, and team meetings?

In Psalm 15, David shares that we can be coaches of integrity if we do nine things:

- Walk blamelessly and do what's right (verse 2).
- Speak the truth gently from your heart (verse 2).
- Don't speak slander against anyone (verse 3).
- Don't harm anyone's reputation (verse 3).
- Honor others who love God (verse 4).
- Don't go back on your word, even when it hurts you (verse 4).
- Lend what's yours without expecting it back (verse 5).
- Stand up for those in the wrong, even when you could reap financial gains (verse 5).

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO DO IT RIGHT?

Getting the job done means that you follow what God says in His Word. If you use other ways to coach, integrity is out the window, and your players see right through you. They won't trust you and commit to you completely. If you're not coaching with integrity, start to change and Coach God's way, acting how He would act and say what He would say. Remember that our success and significance have everything to do with being coaches

who exemplify integrity. We must be committed to obeying God and be the people of integrity He expects us to be.

God expects His coaches to be full of trust, hope, grace, and mercy when they are coaching and training players, not people who are full of themselves and their agendas. Take a look at your life and see where you are positioning yourself on your way to eternity. When you have integrity, you have the means to move yourself ahead to the plan from which God wants you to serve Him. He gives you the Holy Spirit to empower you to move with integrity. God will never be disappointed in you if you have integrity. Integrity will guide your coaching and help you plan all your decision-making processes. You will be that leader God wants you to be, and your players will see you as a person who is unquestionable because of your integrity. Without it, no real success will be possible.

INTEGRITY BRINGS SUCCESS

You'll win more games by using integrity. That's right. If you're fully committed to coaching with integrity, you'll win more games. The impact you'll have on your players and your life will be seen by others and by God. The fact of the matter is that if you're a good listener and can carefully visualize your efforts, you'll be hearing and seeing for yourself. Go ahead, prove me wrong! You will not be able to because God's in control and driving you if you use integrity. You see, God does not want losers on His team. He takes the losers, like you and me, and makes them into winners. You can be a winner and a person of integrity as you steer your team to some great wins and victories.

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 3

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INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF FOOTBALL

Integrity is modeling Christ with your personality, characteristics, speech, and actions. Your integrity will influence your players in a big way for Christ and form in them a deep trust in you and one another.

As Proverbs 11:3a says, “The integrity of the upright guides them.”

Coaches who do not have integrity are not trusted by their players or by anyone else in their programs. They are not seen as honest, but as unreliable and undependable for help and the development of their players' futures in both their soccer and spiritual lives. Your position with your players is to bring something to and into their lives that will benefit them, not you. If you've got integrity, your players will want to be around you, follow you, and give 100 percent to their team and you. They'll sacrifice for what you expect of them, knowing that you're God's man or woman. If you're a teacher of integrity, you'll have a successful team.

DO YOU WANT YOUR PLAYERS AND OTHERS TO TRUST YOU?

The real benefit of being a coach of integrity is that your players will trust you completely, and trust is what holds teams together in one common bond and impacts the team members beyond the matches and practice sessions. When you earn the trust of your players and staff, you'll earn their confidence. You'll also occupy a special place in God's eyes, and He'll reward you immeasurably, both on this earth and when you spend eternity with Him. Without integrity, you will fail, not only as a coach, but as the person God wants you to be. You'll fail your players and cheat them of the experience they could have had with you because you forgot to use integrity.

Coaches with integrity consistently choose the right way. It's always easy to do what's right when you know ahead of time what you stand for. Being filled with integrity, results in a self-disciplined person who is truthful in all his coaching and life situations. Are you ready to stand for what's right and be that coach of integrity God wants you to be? Are you ready to please God?

First Chronicles 29:17a says, "I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity."

COMMIT AND START RIGHT NOW

Though you cannot go back and make a brand-new beginning, you can begin again now and create a brand-new end. Many coaches need to do just that, but they have made the effort so many times that they just don't have the commitment. These coaches still seem to rely on themselves; they simply can't step out in faith and give their lives to Christ, fully believing He has the power to change them. They seem to want to trust themselves more than their Creator.

God asks you to simply surrender all your heart. He'll provide you with the right course for your coaching, and He'll teach you what integrity is from the Bible and will allow you to use it for His purpose in your life and the lives of your players. Give in to Him and give up what you want. It's so much easier to coach when He becomes the administrator of your plan.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 4

"COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU".....Paul Banta

INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF FOOTBALL

If Christ has your heart 100 percent and you're committed to serving Him daily through your coaching plans, decisions, and actions during your career, and if you really mean it, you'll be the coach of integrity He's looking for. God wants you to serve Him, and He will bless you with the love that you have for soccer. But unless we grasp tightly to integrity and use it in our coaching, we're going to grieve the Lord and be cut off from the many blessings He wants us to have and give to others.

God is looking for good coaches, just like the Marines are looking for a few good men. He's always on the lookout. He's not looking for the smartest, the best looking, or the most articulate people. He's looking for coaches who can get the job done. Hey, that's just like the Marines expect. God has a job for you to get done before He takes you home. All you have to do is be faithful.

Integrity is what we do and what we think. It causes us to go one way or the other in our coaching and living for the Lord. Proverbs 10:9 says, "The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out." You can't have integrity without being a person who walks securely before the Lord and who has the faith and trust in God to help him achieve it. God is our unseen partner, who is always there to show us the path to succeed for Him.

Leaders Must Be Committed or Give It Up!

Commitment means more than the physical hard work and emotional energy it takes to do the work on and off the field. A significant level of mature spiritual commitment is also required. If you're going to serve the Lord through your passion for the game, you need to put in extra time to commit to your spiritual concerns for yourself and your team. Guess what? It's a hard battle. You can't go it alone. You'll find that inner strength and peace will come only through the power of the Holy Spirit. John 16:13 says, "The Spirit of truth [the Holy Spirit] will guide you into all truth." The power to use the faith God gives you and your efforts will be the enabling factors, allowing you to serve when you get frustrated with your administrator, complaining parents, a poor budget, spoiled players, bus breakdowns, and the like.

If you're struggling to find a better way to do what you face daily, you need to start taking some risks. You need to make the tough choices of being more committed to the Lord about using your faith, remaining committed to Christ, and using the power of the Holy Spirit to believe God will work His purpose through the daily grind to complete His work through you. Remember, you were selected to do soccer for the Lord.

As John 15:16 says, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go [coach] and bear fruit [players]—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."

Throughout this chapter of John, one of the main points is that we are to remain in Christ. We are told to remain in Christ eleven times. This is what He wants. Remain is a verb meaning "to stay even if others leave; to continue; to go on being; to continue to exist; to endure; to persist; to last." You don't give in and don't give up. We're to be lasting in our commitment to Christ. You train your players to think and practice this way to win matches, and God wants you to do the same for Him. If you remain steadfast, you'll see His commitment begin to work through you. He said He would never leave us or forsake us. He would like you never to leave Him or forsake Him.

In 1 Peter 5:7 we read that we are to cast all our cares on Christ because He truly cares for us. If you do this humbly, under the control of God's power, He will lift you up in a new way of doing commitment.

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 5

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU”.....Paul Banta

Philippians 3:3-4 says, “Don’t be selfish; don’t live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. 4 Don’t think only about your affairs but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing”.

INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF SOCCER

There are characteristics that make up the commitment coaches, and players need to disciple. They are very important if you are to be able to serve and move your passion forward serving others and not yourself. Leaders live for others and are interested in others.

As you read some of the following, evaluate where you perceive yourself to be or where others would perceive you to be at this point in your game:

You Need to Love

Matthew 22:37-39 says, Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’”. (NIV)

You need to be honest and speak the truth in a caring manner. Love, our great gift for others, is what Christ most wants us to be committed to. Exemplifying Christ’s very nature is what He requires of us.

John 13:34 says, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” God the Father loves you, so Jesus loves you, as well. His love remains in you as you show this love to your players.

John 15:12 says, “Jesus gives this command: ‘Love each other as I have loved you.’ The greatest love you can have for a player is to sacrifice for the Lord as you serve him.

Players Need to Be Mentored and Disciplined

Matthew 28:18-20 says, “Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (NIV)

Most players don't have a lot of people in their lives that tell and show them that they love them, and who care enough about them to tell them about their development in the game and talk to them about their spiritual lives. Your job is to help improve their match play and to help grow their spiritual walks. Coaches need not fear teaching players the truth. Just do it in a loving and honest way.

Ephesians 4:15 says, "Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ." Giving honest answers is a sign of your friendship with your players, and it helps build their trust in you.

The game of soccer is for the tough and sturdy coach and player. By the very nature of the game, we need not be afraid of conflicts that arise. Face them head on. Don't gloss them over and create a false sense of peace. Players can sense inter-team problems quickly, so such problems need to be solved as soon as possible. Open discourse is a must. There must be no secrets that let Satan get in on the act. Keep him out and on your team; he has no place near it or on it.

As you teach, your team is to be connected by the very nature of the game; they can be connecting in the body of Christ with your leadership at the same time you teach the game. A real coach with a real team depends on his honesty and frankness, and through his coaching he creates a commitment to being about what he stands for and what he's about on and off the field. If you can influence your players, to be honest, you've guaranteed they will be further committed to the team.

You Need to Be Humble

Have you ever experienced a coach who is stubborn, single-minded, the picture of self-importance, a know-it-all guy, rude, or a person that says "It's my way or the highway" kind of person? I had a high school coach who had no clue about working with players to improve them on the field or positively touch some aspect of their hearts. He had no interpersonal relationship skills. His example of being a leader was all about him and never about the team or the players. He tried to control everyone and set fear in the hearts of many. When I look back, he was in a great position to change live forever, but he was a failure.

Jesus words in Luke 12:48 b says, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded, and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked".

He did such a bad job that I think he probably indirectly drove me to make a better effort than he did. He had no idea how to coach or treat players. It was his way or the highway, and he was so stubborn that he was not appreciated. Not many players wanted to commit to him, but we were stuck with him. We played because we loved sports—not because we liked or loved him. My love for sports superseded my dislike of him, and it was the same for many players on our team. He would not make it in today's school systems. He would be found out pretty soon and would lose his position. I don't think he could spell the word Jesus. Sometimes, when there is nobody for the hiring, somebody has to fill in. They're out there still, aren't they? They are not humble but are full of pride and have no clue.

1 Peter 5:2-3 says, "Care for the flock of God entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly and not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don't lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your good example".

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 6

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INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF SOCCER

You Don't Need Pride

Pride in coaches' lives will block you from moving ahead with the development of your players' soccer and spiritual growth. The Pride blocks movement toward what God wants through His purpose for you. With pride on your plate, you will struggle to integrate your passion for the game into the lives of your players. Prideful coaches may think they're getting the job done, but their self-absorbed blindness is killing their players and what God wants them to do through Him. If you have pride, it opposes God and hurts Him.

Proverbs 18:12 says, "Before his downfall a man's [coach's] heart is proud, but humility comes before honor." If we get our acts together, we'll be honoring God before our players.

Proverbs 3:34 says, "He [God] mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble." God's moment by moment grace is available for us.

If you had a choice, wouldn't you prefer to receive the grace of God than to find yourself in deep trouble because you need to get your way all or part of the time? How can we go through our day coaching and players making some better choices? Think about God's grace and mercy for a moment. We get it by accepting His personalized gift for us through Christ's death. He gives us a personal Savior, who will help us get through every moment of every day throughout our lives. God freely gives us gracious salvation. He also gives us mercy when we screw up, and He always loves us through His continued kindness, His grace to us. His divine grace is never-ending for us.

Here are a few ideas I suggest you use when your pride starts to appear, and your humility is not functioning as God desires. Try them. They can work for you if you use them:

- Learn to Be More Patient

Be willing to wait for your players to respond. Give them tools to get better at the game and let them try to sort out and solve problems in training sessions, so they develop skills that carry over to matches. Don't expect instant perfection after all Rome wasn't built in a ninety-minute match either. Have some fun, and then wait and see whether they can respond to your coaching. Don't try to manipulate them with pressure; it doesn't work effectively. All you have to do is figure out new ways to teach them to respond to your leading so they can play better. After all, you're the coach, and you need to be able to challenge them with different approaches. If you're patient with your players, chances are they'll get it and will be able to put a bigger effort into what you want from them. The key is eventually letting them go and letting them do it, and you can step back and you're your approval. They'll even appreciate you giving them some time to get where you wanted them to go. So try waiting for a while—it's a kinder approach and more loving.

Be like David in the Old Testament, who prayed in Psalm 25:4–5 says, "Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."

Remember that you're coaching for God and that you have a responsibility to teach. Lead, disciple and guide your players correctly.

- Be Ready to Receive Correction and Follow It

You're not the only coach or player on the block. For years, my wife has been my greatest advisor and friend—whether or not I like or want it. If only I had listened to her earlier in my coaching career! I may even have won more matches. They say behind every man is a good wife. In my case, as I say from time to time, behind my dead brain cells is an unbelievable wife. In your case, it could be an older person who could disciple you. It could be your players; listen to what they think about you. Find a friend who will hold you accountable for getting it together Biblically. I personally have three guys I've been meeting with for about five years, and it works.

Proverbs 27:17 says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." (NIV)

Remember that you're not always right. God will provide you with life as a learning experience, and the answers are out there if you don't know them all. Find them to do your job better.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "There's nothing like the written Word of God for showing you the way to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us the truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way. Through the Word, we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us". (The Message)

- Point the Spotlight Away From Yourself

Give honor and the credit for your accomplishments to other people who were part of it and who deserve some of the applauses. Most likely it will be your players, who have to physically and mentally put up with what you give them and who kill themselves for you.

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 7

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU”.....Paul Banta

Imitating Christ's Humility

Philippians 2:1-4 says, “Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your interests but each of you to the interests of the others”. (NIV)

INTEGRITY IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF FOOTBALL

There are characteristics that make up the commitment coaches, and players need to disciple. They are very important if you are to be able to serve and move your passion forward serving others and not yourself. Leaders live for others and are interested in others.

As you read some of the following, evaluate where you perceive yourself to be or where others would perceive you to be at this point in your game:

Be Careful What You Say In Public

Keep your public words to a minimum and keep what you'd sometimes like to say to players inside you. Don't sin with your words, but rather show love through them.

Matthew 12:36 says, “Men will have to give account on the Day of Judgment for every careless word they have spoken.”

We need to start shutting our mouths so that we do not speak thoughtless words, and strive to be like David, who wrote in Psalm 19:14 says, “May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock, and my Redeemer.” Make sure your words please rather than destroy.

Humbly Think, Speak and Do Things for Others, Not For Your Agenda

In essence, humility is the act of thinking less about you. You think, do, and say more about your players and other staff than you do with yourself. When you start focusing mentally and verbally on others and their successes, you're honoring God. Focusing less on the 'me concept' and more on the 'others concept' means you're on target for becoming the humble character God wants you to be.

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus”.

Through the practice of being more humble, you will cultivate your players to play better, and you will have a better chance of working with them to develop their spiritual growth. Humble men are men to be trusted and believed. If you want your players to believe and trust you, be a humble character.

Respect Your Players Regardless of Who They Are and How They Play

The key to gaining the respect of your team is to understand where your players are coming from and where you believe you can take them. We all carry baggage that affects our daily living. Players are no different. They carry baggage just like you, sometimes pretty heavy stuff. We've all seen many types of baggage: divorced parents, the death of a family member, boyfriend or girlfriend problems, drugs, stealing, cheating, alcohol, bad grades, and a plethora of other issues. Don't emphasize how far your players have to go to change their baggage, but rather how far they have come with the baggage they carry. Remember that if we had to clean up our baggage before we become Christians, we never could have been saved.

Philippians 2:1-7 says, “Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness”. (NIV)

You coach players, not baggage. Christ saved you, not your baggage. As you accept your players and help bring their lives and games together, you will be able to help get them out of the holes they're in. If you respect your layers as players and resist disrespecting them because they carry loads that burden them, they will respect you for working with them, and that will build confidence in them to move their very characters, lives, and game forward.

DO YOUR PLAYERS FEEL FREE TO COME TO YOU?

Develop a confidentiality policy among your staff, your players, and yourself. If your players can come to you privately, you'll be the guy they trust. It often takes time for this to happen. You have to prove that your mouth is a locked safe, and nothing is allowed out. Your heart becomes a private vessel that retains the problems, hurts, secrets, and expectations of your players. Until they allow you to share, you are just a sponge soaking up your players' confidence in you. As you develop confidence and trust that your players need you, it is very possible that through you they will come to accept a higher authority, Jesus Christ, who will be the Master of their lives. You need

commitment beyond the match. By committing to your team members and bringing them alongside you, you'll be serving God with your passion.

You must make a consolidated effort to help them in their game and create an attitude that God's in charge and that He is the source of your strength. Growing your team and every player is your responsibility and must be your heart's desire.

"This integrity thing is something to get serious about and start making choice that will not only win game but hearts".....Paul Banta

Lord and Savior, I need to have a heart that is pure and the person you expect me to be....filled with integrity. Just like you Lord. Show me the areas in which I need the integrity you want me to have and use for you as I coach. If you see any lack of integrity in my life, bring it to my attention by others, by my own thinking, or by the prompting of Your Holy Spirit, so I can make corrections in my life to serve you better. Thanks, Lord. I love you and appreciate you for giving me this passion for soccer. Help me serve you better, Lord

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 8

"COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU".....Paul Banta

Influencing Other by Your Leadership

Leadership: "Effective Approaches to Being a Positive Impact on Youth Players."

What is Leadership?

A leader is a visionary who shows the way in speech and actions to motivate others to end results by reminding them of the overall vision and the accomplishing of the goals they plan to achieve. Leaders are inspirational as they clearly communication to others and inspires their confidence to lead players or teammates. Leaders get others to do what they see best for them and like it.

Matthew 15:14 reads, "If a blind man guides a blinds man, both will fall into the pit."

One of the great question we need to ask is how can I, as a Christian Coach or player, be an effective leader and others to Christ, make them disciples for Christ, bring them to a greater understanding of discipling others and serving Christ while at the same time create an atmosphere for yourself and those you're leading to be living a growing worthy lifestyle for Christ?

How can I have a positive impact on others I lead and at the same time equip them to be that person God designed them to be for Christ His Son?

The answer is: By being holy and using the available power of the Holy Spirit, reading, understanding your Bible and other literature, and learning from other mature Christians, meditating and praying. For years, I did not use that power available at my conversion. No one explained it's availability to me, but as time went on and I did the above I guarantee you can have that power to influence and disciple others. This is God plan for all Christians in this game. It's not just about the WIN and that's is very important, but it really in the end about DISCIPLING a saved SOUL so one day you'll hear well done faithful servant and that player you disciple would hear the same thing.

2 Timothy 1:9-10 says, "He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." NIV

1 Peter 1:14-16 says, "As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy because I am holy." NIV

"Our faith is dead without our servicing the Lord, so we have to have walked a path of discipleship to lead others. God has promised to give us the Holy Spirit that will give us the power to influence and disciple others."

Acts 1:8 says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." NIV

Ephesians 1:13-14 says, "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory." NIV

2 Timothy 1:7 says, "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline." NIV

"Everyone influence someone and as a leader you influence every moment you're with others. You influence by they way you look, speak, walk and touch them as individuals and as a group."

Influencing others takes a personal decision, commitment, effort (physical, emotion, mental and spiritual on your part) and quite allot of your time both on and off the field.

4 Stages of Developing Influence

1- Modeling-Is what they see in you.

2- Motivation-Being able to encourage and communicate to players to their physical, emotional and mental levels in training, matches and other necessary times.

3- Mentoring-Means, pouring your life into players and helping them reach their potential.

4- Multiplying-It's when you help others influence others.

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 9

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU”.....Paul Banta

Influencing Other by Your Leadership

Nine Areas of Action you should use as you Influence and Lead Your Players

I=Integrity
N=Nurtures
F=Faithful
L=Listens
U=Understanding
E=Empowers
N=Navigates
C=Connects
E=Enlarges
I=Integrity

John 7:18 says, “Whoever speaks on their does so to gain personal glory, but he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him.”

Proverb 10:9 says, “Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.”

Proverbs 11:3 says, “The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.”

Psalms 15:2 says, “The one whose walk is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart.”

A leader is a person of influence has integrity (honesty) with those in his charge. If players can't trust you at one point, they may not trust you at all. If you're a person of integrity, your followers will want to be around you. A leader who is a person of integrity influences others to bring something to their life and something that will benefit them not the leader. The benefit of integrity is trust. The Trust holds others together. When you earn the trust of others, you earn their confidence. Without integrity, you can fail. “It's always easy to do right when you know ahead of time what you stand for.”

N=Nurtures

Hebrews 3:13-14 says, “But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share with Christ if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.”

2 Timothy 3:14-17 says, "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which can make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Hebrews 5:14 says, "But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

A leader is a person of influence and nurtures the players they lead because those being lead need encouragement, recognition, security, hope, love, etc. As a leader, you can't antagonize and influence at the same time. The heart of a nurturing process (your heart) is genuinely concern for others. You can't dislike, despise and disparage players. After all, you brought them to your team because you saw something special in them. Give to your players your love and respect. You can't make a player you lead feel important to you secretly feel they are nobodies.

The key to becoming a nurturer is other minded. Put others first rather than put them in their place. When we have a sense of peace about the way we conduct ourselves, an understanding of the direction God is intending for us and who we are we will be other minded and give ourselves away to our players and team.

Four actions you do when you Nurture your players

1- Positive self-worth or self-esteem is developed - Psalm 139:13-15 - "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth."

2- Sense of belonging is provided - 1 Peter 2:9 - "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, which you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

3- Feeling of significance is provided - 1 Corinthians 2:9 - "However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."

4- Hope and Peace are provided - Romans 5:1-5 - "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."

As a Leader, how do I become the Nurture to your players?

- 1- Commit to them by being part of their life on and off the field. This takes an effort. What happens on the field will influence what happens on the field in training and matches.
- 2- Believe in them to perform and by their efforts and by their abilities to play soccer better.
- 3- Be accessible to them. Let them know you're available 24/7.
- 4- Give with no strings attached. Give yourself away regardless if they are not a starter on your first team.
- 5- Give the opportunities to get better as a player and person. You provide a forum for development that will make them move upwards and forward not downwards.
- 6- Lift them to a higher level of both spiritual development and their walk with Christ.

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 10

BEING FAITHFUL IN YOUR LIFE TO DISCIPLE IN THE GAME OF SOCCER
Help Create Faith in Your Players by Being Faithful In Your Efforts to Coach with Grace, Mercy, and Love

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND THEY HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSED FOR THEM”.....Paul Banta

Influencing Others by Your Leadership

In our last email, we shared 'Nine Areas of Action' that coaches can demonstrate and live out when they coach their players. We shared with you about Integrity on the job and how to Nurture your players. We'll be covering being a Faithful when you're with your players on and off the field.

I=Integrity

N=Nurture

F=Faithful

L=Listens

U=Understanding

E=Empowers

N=Navigates

C=Connects

E=Enlarges

F=Faithful

James 2:17-22 says, "So it is for faith without deeds: it is totally dead. Say to whoever challenges you, You have faith, and I have good deeds; show me your faith apart from actions and I, for my part, will show you my faith in the way I act. Do you believe there is one God? Well enough, but do not forget that the demons also believe and tremble with fear! You foolish one, do you have to be convinced that faith without deeds is useless?" (NIV)

Mark 10:52 says, "And Jesus said to him, Go your way, your faith has made you well. And immediately he could see, and he followed Jesus along the road."

2 Timothy 4:7 says, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

A leader is a person of influence who must develop faith in their players by being faithful in serving the Lord through this great game. Here are some points to consider as you work to develop others trusting in you as a Christian leader and believing the Christ will work His work through your efforts.

I have found one of the biggest obstacles that players face when being on teams is that they carry and bring a lot of negative baggage when they come to train or play a match. Most of that baggage comes from non-soccer related situations in their lives. We've heard the story, and we can believe them. This stuff can wreck their training and match time and as coaches we must help them. You've got to come along side them and believe in them. It's not always an easy task but never-the-less you do not have a choice since you choose them to play on your side. It's part of their soccer development, your special plan for them and your responsibility. Remember Jesus chose you. You did not choose Him. Just like your players did not choose you, but rather you selected them for success.

John 15:12-17 says, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other." (NIV)

James 1:2-3 says, "Consider yourselves fortunate, my brothers and sisters, when you meet with every kind of trial, for you know that the testing of your faith makes you steadfast."

What Players Can Often Think of About Themselves

- 1- Most players do not have complete faith in themselves.
- 2- Most players do not have someone that has faith in them.
- 3- Most players may not know when the leader has faith in them.
- 4- Most players will do anything to live up to you having faith in them because you chose them.

Players being lead rise and fall to meet your expectation level that you have for them. If you believe in them, they'll go the extra mile for you to do their best in their training and matches. They will work hard for you and their team. You need to create an atmosphere where they can be nurtured for success, growth and develop who they are in the game and the 'game of life'. When you have a faith in others (actual believe in them) you give them an incredible gift. They won't forget you either.

“Trust and have faith in your players and they'll be true to you and their team mates.”

Your Actions (your efforts) Create Faith in Those Players You Lead

James 2:17-22 says, “So it is for faith without deeds: it is totally dead. Say to whoever challenges you, You have faith, and I have good deeds; show me your faith apart from actions and I, for my part, will show you my faith in the way I act. Do you believe there is one God? Well enough, but do not forget that the demons also believe and tremble with fear! You foolish one, do you have to be convinced that faith without deeds is useless? Think of our father, Abraham. Was he not justified by the act of offering his son Isaac on the altar? So you see, his faith was active along with his deeds and became perfect by what he did.” (NIV)

B= Believe in them before they succeed

E= Emphasize (focus) on their strengths

L= List their past successes (remind them and re-motivate them)

I= Instill confidence when they fail

E= Experience some wins' together, both at a ministry experience and away from serving

V= Visualize their future success with them, so they see it as well

E= Expect a higher level of commitment and lifestyle from your players

“Treat your player's great and they'll show themselves great.”

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 11

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU”.....Paul Banta

Influencing Other by Your Leadership

L=Listens

James 1:19 says, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; the way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.”

A leader is a person of influence when he listens to players. Leaders must not do all of the talking. They must be skillful listeners and teach others to be able to share openly to speak and solve the problem. In order to become a good listener, you must be able to hear.

Some Suggestions for Being a Listening Coach

Proverbs 11:14 says, “Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.”

- 1- Look at your players when they speak and focus eye contact on them.
- 2- Focus on understanding what they are trying to tell you.
- 3- Determine your players needs from what they are saying and encourage them.
- 4- Suspend your immediate judgments directed at them which will hurt them.
- 5- Ask questions of your players with clarity.
- 6- Make sure you understand what your players need.
- 7- Stop total dictating and let your players take ownership of their efforts in training and the match.

Mark 4:24-25 says, “Consider carefully what you hear, he continued. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

Benefits from Listen to Others

When we work and understand on whom we are to become for Christ we have the freedom to be who He design us to be and not what others think we need to be in their

eyes. You don't have to compare your efforts with your players to anyone else. Instead, we listen to the Holy Spirit and bring that concept to the table when training our players and coaching them in matches.

Success is not to be measured by the winning of matches and your record. That will come. Real success is developing your player to hear the right thing from your mouth and to see that your actions are consistent with biblical principle, so they see you're a person of integrity; it's knowing God's will and being right in the center of you, your players and team. From the successes, you bring to the table for your players they become the significant person God designed them to be and you become part of this discipling process.

This is what we are called to do and be for our Father in Heaven

Psalm 139:14 says, "Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it."

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 12

"COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU".....Paul Banta

Influencing Other by Your Leadership

U=Understands

If you're in this game you automatically become a leader/disciple, and you're a person who must learn to understand their players. The key to leading your players will be that you want to understand those you are leading. We need to rely on the wisdom that's available by God and we do this by reading His word daily and by listening to His Holy Spirit empowering us to understand our players to develop them on and off the field. Try some of these verses for an encouragement to move forward.

James 1:5-8 says, "If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help, and won't be condescended to when you ask for it. Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought. People who "worry their prayers" are like wind-whipped waves. Don't think you're going to get anything from the Master that way, adrift at sea, keeping all your options open". The Message

James 1:19-20 says, "Brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires". NIV

Ephesians 4:15-16 says, "God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love—like Christ in everything. We take our lead from Christ, who is the source of everything we do. He keeps us in step with each other. His very breath and blood flow through us, nourishing us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love". The Message

The moment your players see that they are being understood by you they become more motivated to see your influence on their lives. This will have a profound impact on their serving (like you), mentoring others and their spiritual development. You will be giving them freedom to express themselves in Christ. A freedom they would never have had if God did not put you before them.

How can you begin to understand your players?

1- Know they want to be somebody to feel important and valued by you, their teammates, friends in school and parents.

2- Your players are in the game and many times don't care until they know how much you care about them. You brought them into you teams, and they want approval for what they do in training and matches.

3- Every player needs the coach to be successful, grow and develop their game and life.

4- Your players can be somebody when they know you understand and believe in them.

5- When you map out a way that will help your players you influence alot of others around you and them. It will be the school, community and other teams knowing that something special is happening in your program to your players.

E=Empowers

A leader/disciple is a person of influence who empowers their players. As a coach of your team and program you empower to enable your players to reach their highest level of personal soccer and spiritual development and you're there to empower their growth in many ways that will influence them in the immediate, short and long term. You are a powerful leader who changes and influences the lives of others. We hold tight with integrity and love and never turn back from our calling, and we know that all our strength comes from the Father through Christ our Lord and Savior. You build into our players what God has done for you because He put you in charge and loves your players.

1 Corinthians 16:13 says, "Keep your eyes open, hold tight to your convictions, give it all you've got, be resolute, and love without stopping." The Message

Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do everything through Christ who give me my strength."

Titus 2:15 says, "Tell them all this. Build up their courage, and discipline them if they get out of line. You're in charge. Don't let anyone put you down". The Message

Empowering is giving your influence to your players for the purpose of their growth and development that allows for many successful experiences and eventually developing players who will be significant to turn around and help changes others. You as a coach become the empowering model of Christ, the person He designed you to be. If we model

our Savior, your players will want more from you than just a good training session. They'll want the Jesus of you that you exemplify.

Some Qualifications for a Leader Who Wants to Empower Their Players

1- You're the leader, and you're in a position to lead. This qualifies you. You may not yet be the perfect coach (and I'm sure there is one) but you've been select to coach so lead and always get better at your job. This is our responsibility. Coaches who are not involved in their own personal spiritual and soccer development aren't leaders. They are posers.

2- You must develop a relationship with others you want to empower. You can't lead without purpose and a place to take your take players forward and upward. This takes time but if you do the game of soccer and the game of life right and with faithfulness you will develop those relationships that players want and need and believe me when I say players are always ready to move forward.

3- Others will be empowered by you if they respect you. Many times what come out of our mouth as coaches are simply not fitting for player development. We may think so but in reality, for example, verbal abuse kills and as bad as a gun. Turn your negative thoughts about the response you have about your players into praying for them or going over to them and rather than kill them with your eyes, actions and mouth put your arm on their shoulder and tell them some special. I use to say I played one time, and I understand so know the problem. Give words of encouragement rather than a word that will slaughter.

4- You must be committed in all you think, say, do and never turn your eyes from this goal and follow through with your objective in doing so. Your players are not stupid, and they are very perceptive, so they are looking for you to be their leader. They may not tell you, "could you lead me", but I can assure you they will kill themselves for you if they believe in what you are doing for their game and life.

These are 7 Steps to Empowering Your Players

1- Evaluate them - Tell them where they are in the game and where you see them going potentially. Every player wants to have a road to go on, and you can be that provider of their direction. Many players just don't get enough direction in their life from those who are to lead them. They need you to point them only forward and in no other direction.

2- Model for them - They do what they see you do and say what they hear you say.

3- Give them permission to succeed. Stop doing all the constant coaching verbally and demanding from them perfection. It will never happen. They'll move forward allot faster in their training and match performance and life if you give them permission to think for themselves. You can then make the necessary suggestion that they believe are right for them. Together you and your players can change. This takes time, but it's so worthwhile in the end. You will have a team that is thinking players and coach themselves in a match. In fact, when you say something to them they usually understand right away and perform even better.

4. Transfer your authority to them to get the job done. You are the lead, and you simply want to turn over some of what you are required to do as a leader to them. Players need your approval of giving your authority away to them for success.

5- Show your confidence in them publicly. It's nice to be recognized by others for a job well done. It's also wonderful for you to share how your players depend on Their Living Savior in Jesus Christ for all they do in their game and life.

6- Supply them with quality feedback (honest and positive). Be a good grace and mercy giver.

7- Release them to develop on their own. Creative, personal playing rhythm and the development of a playing style as an individual and a team is often lacking in the game. It is derived by coaches of are dictators. Allow for your players to develop their entire match in both attack and defense by grasping the game itself for a more creative and free way. They will feel more comfortable on the ball, playing better in training and matches. They start to realize that they are responsible for the game, not you. I've come to the conclusion the team has 11 players on the field at one time. The coach is never part of the team on the field. Let them play.

“The key to empowering others is to find out what they want and help them achieve this.”

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 13

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU”.....Paul Banta

Influencing Other by Your Disciplining Leadership

N=Navigates

2 Timothy 3:14-17 says, “14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which can make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work”. NIV

Coaches are leader/coach/disciples who can influence to help navigate their players guiding them through the game on and off the field. You allow your players take a place under your guidance and you sticking it out with them until they can make it on their own by coming along side them, guiding and teaching them how to go through the passion they have for the game through training them, coaching them in matches, teaching them how to serve others and living out the game of soccer and the game of life. You're at the

helm of their understanding and development, and you help them set the course for their life, and when they're ready to do it on their own you release them.

All of this takes a level of perseverance on your part by listen to our Father, who is always trying to direct your heart and your path. Life is not always an easy road to be on either as a leader or someone you are leading, but we work hard and wait passionately through the good and bad times. What we speak about and the words out of our mouth are to be chosen with care and done in a loving way. Through the opening of your heart and ears, you will be listened by others. What is God saying to you through the verses below?

2 Thessalonians 3:4-5 says, "We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance."

Lamentations 3:25-27 says, "God proves to be good to the man who passionately waits, to the woman who diligently seeks. It's a good thing to hope quietly, quietly hope for help from GOD. It's a good thing when you're young to stick it out through the hard times."
The Message

Matthew 12:33-37 says, "If you grow a healthy tree, you'll pick healthy fruit. If you grow a diseased tree, you'll pick worm-eaten fruit. The fruit tells you about the tree. You have minds like a snake pit! How do you suppose what you say is worth anything when you are so foul-minded? It's your heart, not the dictionary that gives meaning to your words. A good person produces good deeds and words season after season. An evil person is a blight on the orchard. Let me tell you something: Every one of these careless words is going to come back to haunt you. There will be a time of Reckoning. Words are powerful; take them seriously. Words can be your salvation. Words can also be your damnation." The Message

How Can You Navigate Your Players as You Lead Them?

1. Help your players identify their destiny. Since you see further and have more life experiences your players will see, you can help them get there to where they need to be.
2. Help them plot their course of action.
3. Think ahead for them when necessary.
4. Help with your players' course corrections. This will improve their walk in life and get them back on track if they get off.
5. God navigators (us coaches) stick it out with their players on the field. "A best friend is he who brings out the best in you."

COACHES ARE LEADERS and DISCIPLES SERIES – PART 14

“COACHES WHO ARE LEADERS AND DISCIPLES LET GOD LEAD IN THEIR LIVES AND HANG ON FOR THE RIDE DOING THE WORK HE DESIGNED AND PURPOSE FOR YOU”.....Paul Banta

Influencing Other by Your Disciplining Leadership

Hebrews 6:17-19 says, “When people make promises, they guarantee them by appeal to some authority above them so that if there is any question that they’ll make good on the promise, the authority will back them up. When God wanted to guarantee his promises, he gave his word, a rock-solid guarantee—God can’t break his word. And because his word cannot change, the promise is likewise unchangeable”.

C=Connects

God connecting with us is no mistake, and He wants us to connect with our players as we understand from the above scriptures in Hebrews. A leader/coach/disciple of influence connects with their players. You come alongside them and almost attached yourself at times to them. You do not wait for them to come along side you. Connecting is by your love seen by those you are leading. Leaders go the extra to be part of their future. Use your heart to do this with a deep caring for your player. Allot of things that happen in your player’s lives that don’t mean much in the end and eventually disappear.

Your job is to stay connect to your players by training them to walk and run forward so they are like your Father in heaven when His word below says, “But you, O God, you are both tender and kind, not easily angered, immense in love, and you never, never quit. So look me in the eye and show kindness, give your servant (coach) the strength to go on”.

1 Peter 1:22-25 says, “Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart.[a] 23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, all people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word that was preached to you.” NIV
Psalms 86:11-12 says, “Train me, GOD, to walk straight; then I’ll follow your true path. Put me together, one heart and mind; then, undivided, I’ll worship in joyful fear. From the bottom of my heart I thank you, dear Lord; I’ve never kept secret what you’re up too. You’ve always been great toward me—what love! You snatched me from the brink of disaster! God, these bullies have reared their heads! A gang of thugs is after me—and they don’t care a thing about you. But you, O God, you are both tender and kind, Not easily angered, immense in love, and you never, never quit. So look me in the eye and show kindness, give your servant the strength to go on, save your dear, dear child! Make a show of how much you love me so the bullies who hate me will stand there slack-jawed, like you, GOD, gently and powerfully put me back on my feet”. The Message

To connect with your players, you need to do the following:

1. Don’t take your players for granted. If you do they just may take you for grant and all that you’re trying to do will never happen. You chose them now work with them Look what Christ did with his 12 apostles for three years. He stuck it out. They are valuable.

2. As coaches, we need to possess a make a difference mindset or attitude. Believe you can make a difference, believe what you say can make a difference, believe the person you are leading can make a difference, believe that together you can make a big difference. I can do what you can't do, you can do what I can't do and together we can make a difference.

3. The initiate movement toward each player. Your players may not cozy up to you right off the bat for all kinds of a reason so keep reaching out to them.

4. Look for common ground and what areas you have in common. Get on with something in common with your players. Start off with what you have them in your hands with soccer and go on from that point.

5. Recognize and respect differences and personalities. There's nobody like you. Don't try to clone your player's to be like you. They'll never be like you. They have their personalities, future and a Father in heaven that will carry them through with His plans for you, but He needs you to coach them for His purposes and His glory.

6. Find the key ways to get to your players hearts. Your position is to find out what make them tick, so you can get them to connect with you, other players and those that will be in their life in their future.

7. Communicate from your heart and love. This is what matters to them? Be real and honest. If you have a hard timing showing your affections and love for your players, you'd better find out how to do that. If we don't have, that approach get sorted out and find help to move your thinking, words and actions forward.

8. Share common experiences together. The most common thing is soccer, but soccer isn't everything so find out what others like to do and have great experiences together. Next step does them.

9. Once you begin to connect with your players, move forward. Connecting with your players may take some time for some players and a short period with others. Connect and go forward and never look back.

"You can't impact the lives of others in serving Jesus until you connect with them and only then can you takes them on a journey and make differences."