



SDG BASEBALL

THE GOSPEL GUARDRAILS

The Gospel is the most important message we will ever communicate. At SDG Baseball, we use the world of baseball as an opportunity to proclaim Jesus Christ to athletes, coaches, families, opponents, and anyone else God places before us. These guardrails do not require every Gospel presentation to sound identical. Coaches and athletes should speak naturally and grow in their ability to communicate biblical truth. However, the substance of the message must remain consistent. We are not free to change the Gospel. Our responsibility is to proclaim faithfully the message God has given us.

1

BEGIN WITH GOD

The Gospel begins with who God is, not with who we are.

We begin with God because Scripture begins with God. He is the Creator of all things, perfectly holy, perfectly righteous, perfectly good, and perfectly just. He created us, He owns us, and we are accountable to Him. We do not begin by telling people that God exists to make their lives better or help them accomplish their dreams. We begin by helping them understand the God before whom every person will one day stand. Until we understand something of the holiness of God, we will never understand the seriousness of our sin or the greatness of the salvation found in Jesus Christ.

2

CLEARLY EXPLAIN SIN

Our greatest problem is that we have sinned against a holy God.

Sin cannot be reduced to mistakes, failures, weaknesses, or bad decisions. Scripture teaches that we have broken God's law and rebelled against His authority. We have failed to love God as He deserves, and every one of us has fallen short of His glory. When we share the Gospel, we must speak about sin clearly because people cannot understand why they need a Savior until they understand what they need to be saved from. We should speak graciously and humbly, remembering that we stand before God as sinners ourselves, but we must never soften the truth about man's guilt before Him.

3

EXPLAIN WHAT SIN DESERVES

A righteous God must judge sin.

The consequence of sin is not simply that life becomes difficult or that we experience broken relationships. Scripture teaches that the wages of sin is death and that every person will stand before God in judgment. Because God is perfectly just, He cannot ignore our rebellion against Him. Apart from Christ, we stand guilty before God and deserve His righteous judgment and eternal punishment. This is difficult news, but it is necessary news. The Gospel becomes truly good news when we understand the judgment from which Christ saves His people.

4

CLEARLY IDENTIFY JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God who became man to save sinners.

We must never assume that someone understands who Jesus is simply because we mention His name. Jesus Christ is not simply a teacher, prophet, moral example, or religious leader. He is the eternal Son of God who took upon Himself human flesh. He was truly God and truly man, lived in perfect obedience to His Father, and never committed a single sin. The Gospel depends entirely upon who Christ is. Only the sinless Son of God could stand in the place of guilty sinners and provide the righteousness we could never produce for ourselves.

5

PROCLAIM THE SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF CHRIST

Jesus died in the place of sinners and bore the judgment they deserved.

The cross must always remain at the center of our Gospel presentation. Jesus did not die because events moved beyond His control, nor was His death simply an example of sacrificial love. On the cross, Christ willingly stood in the place of sinners and bore the righteous judgment of God against sin. He shed His blood and gave His life as a sacrifice for His people. The punishment we deserved fell upon Him so that those who belong to Him could be forgiven and declared righteous before God. We should never speak about the love of Christ at the cross without also explaining what Christ accomplished there.



6

ALWAYS PROCLAIM THE RESURRECTION**The Savior who died for sinners rose bodily from the grave.**

Our Gospel presentation does not end at the cross. Jesus Christ was buried, and on the third day He rose bodily from the dead. The resurrection declares His victory over sin and death and confirms that His sacrifice was sufficient. Christianity is not built around the memory of a dead religious leader. We proclaim a risen and reigning Savior. Whenever we explain the Gospel, the death and resurrection of Christ belong together. Christ died for sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried, and He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

7

CALL SINNERS TO REPENTANCE AND FAITH**The biblical response to the Gospel is to repent and believe.**

The Gospel demands a response. Jesus commanded sinners to repent and believe the Gospel. Repentance is a turning from sin toward God, and faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. We should never leave someone with the impression that knowing the facts of the Gospel is enough. Neither should we replace the biblical call to repentance and faith with vague language about "asking Jesus into your heart," "trying Jesus," or simply making a decision. We lovingly and clearly call sinners to turn from their sin and place their faith and trust entirely in Jesus Christ.

8

MAKE CLEAR THAT SALVATION IS BY GRACE ALONE**Nothing we do can contribute to the work Christ has accomplished.**

No person can earn salvation through good works, morality, church attendance, baptism, religious activity, or becoming a better person. Playing for a Christian team cannot save anyone. Growing up in a Christian family cannot save anyone. Even our repentance and faith are not works by which we make ourselves worthy before God. Salvation is entirely the gracious work of God, received through faith in Jesus Christ. Our confidence before God rests in the righteousness of Christ and His finished work, not in anything we have accomplished for ourselves.

9

NEVER GIVE FALSE ASSURANCE**Our responsibility is to proclaim the Gospel faithfully and leave the work of salvation to God.**

We should encourage people to repent and believe, and we should gladly pray with anyone who desires to call upon the Lord. However, a prayer, raised hand, emotional response, or conversation does not give us authority to declare that someone has been saved. Salvation belongs to the Lord. The evidence of genuine conversion will be seen through continuing faith in Christ, repentance from sin, love for God's Word, and a changed life produced by the Holy Spirit. We proclaim Christ faithfully, call people to respond biblically, and trust God to accomplish the work that only He can accomplish.

10

KEEP JESUS CHRIST AT THE CENTER**The goal is not to master a presentation; the goal is to faithfully proclaim Christ.**

Frameworks such as GDS are valuable because they help us remember the Gospel and communicate it clearly, but the framework itself is never the message. Jesus Christ is the message. We do not want our athletes to become skilled at repeating a script while missing the glory of the Savior they are proclaiming. We want them to know Christ, love Christ, understand His Gospel, and become increasingly confident in telling others about Him. Baseball gives us an extraordinary opportunity to do that. We will use that opportunity faithfully, trusting that the Gospel remains the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.

GOD IS HOLY. We deserve judgment because of our sin. GOD SENT HIS SON TO SAVE SINNERS. Therefore, we call everyone everywhere to repent and believe in Jesus Christ.

That is the Gospel we will proclaim. That is the Gospel we will protect. And that is the Gospel we pray our athletes will carry with them long after their final game is played.

SOLI DEO GLORIA.