

Character Action Media

Champions of The Super Bowl – On The Field And In Life

Lesson Goals

- Inspire students toward a balanced life of being physically strong and active within sports while still being a caring person who serves others
- Help students to see the importance of solidarity in being present with others and sharing a unity of purpose, especially as we are helping others
- Encourage students to realize the importance of wisdom in discerning how to be effective and to focus on what is true and has lasting value in our service to others
- Inspire students to love others both within our own families and outside of our families, in dedicating ourselves to help others with no expectation of anything in return

Primary Virtues

Love: to freely give of ourselves for the betterment of another person, without expecting anything in return

Solidarity: being present with others, unity from a shared common purpose and / or interest; active loyalty within a group; mutual support within a group

Wisdom: ability to apply knowledge, experience, understanding in ways that are effective and good. The ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting

Secondary Virtues

Generosity: giving freely of our own possessions, time and/or talent

Family Dedication and Support: complete willingness to support other members of our families physically, emotionally and spiritually, motivated by love

Lesson Structure

This lesson has a different structure in that there are two videos and moderately longer leader transition statements. To follow are the 5 steps for this lesson:

1. Leader Introduction to the Video

We often hear about professional athletes' personal lives when they make a mistake and do something wrong. In this lesson we're going to focus instead on football stars who in their personal lives are displaying an exceptional degree of wisdom, solidarity and love in helping others, in addition to being exceptional athletes. Our first story is about David Bruton, special teams captain and safety for the Super Bowl champion Denver Broncos who was having the best season of his career until he broke his leg in a late season game against the Pittsburgh Steelers. Bruton amazingly played with a broken leg for another three quarters! Let's see how Bruton has been a source of strength not only for his team, but as importantly for his community.

2. First Video

<http://www.9news.com/videos/sports/2015/12/09/77073394/>

3. Leader Transition into the Second Video

Bruton is certainly "all in" helping the children he hopes to empower, and not just with money but with his time, talents and energy.

Our next story comes from the NFC champion Carolina Panthers where tight end Greg Olsen is having another spectacular season. Olsen is exceptional not just because of his playing abilities, but also because of the way he has dedicated himself to his family and to helping others through an extremely difficult medical situation for one of his children.

4. Second Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2abDtpSkc74>

5. Leader Summary

The story of Greg Olsen and his family shows us that in the most challenging times we can discover the best within ourselves, in Olsen's case, a deep sense of dedication and love for his family, as well as generosity in helping others.

Discussion Question Options (Bruton story: questions 1-3 | Olsen story: questions 4-7 | Wrap up: question 8)
(discussion prompts / answers are in parentheses if needed)

Before beginning our discussion let's read over the virtues and their definitions (included within the online lesson as a separate document)

1. What does David Bruton value that he wants to help pass on to children who are in need?
(education and the ability to read)

How does his Bruton's Books project help children learn how to read?
(tutoring and buying books for school reading programs)

Does it surprise you that a football star is so focused on education, and should it surprise us?

2. How does Bruton live out the virtue of solidarity in his life?

(Bruton spends time with the children he wants to help, often on his days off, and reads with them. This wasn't in the video but you can point out that during the 2011 lock out, Bruton went back to his home town to be a substitute teacher so that he could be with children more and experience teaching first-hand)

3. If you were famous like Bruton, would you spend your free time helping others in need?

(encourage an in-depth discussion of why we should – the value of caring for and helping others, solidarity in that we are together as brothers and sisters despite differences in background, money or any other factors, the sense of fulfillment and true joy that we experience when we help others)

Do you think now and in the future we should give of our time and talent in helping others, or just donate our money, or both?

4. How did Greg Olsen, his wife and even his young children respond when Tate became seriously ill? What were their attitudes and actions that reflect their love for Tate?

(a sense of complete commitment to do whatever it takes to help Tate survive and to become healthy even though most parents choose not to, the children pray for him and toast him at family meals and wish him well at wishing wells. Share with the students a story not covered in the video that Greg Olsen, after one of Tate's surgeries, slept in a lounge chair for weeks to be with him through the night and then each day went to practice with his team, which is physically extremely demanding.)

5. Have you experienced within your own lives or seen other families where they rallied together to support a family member in need? How did they express their support? (also presented as a journal writing option)

6. In discussing the uncertainty of his son Tate's future Greg Olsen said "we're not going to live today worried about tomorrow because then we're never going to be able to move forward." How does this statement speak to us today in our lives?

(One idea is that if we're expending too much time and energy worrying about present problems, as opposed to working on solutions, then we are probably missing how to better address those very problems. We're likely also going to miss what we are called to do in the future)

7. How does the Olsen family live out the virtue of generosity?

(raising money for their foundation to assist other families facing the same illness – specifically paying for skilled health care workers to be in their homes to care for their child in between surgeries.)

(What wasn't covered in the video is how Greg Olsen and his wife also dedicate a lot of time in speaking with and encouraging other families who are facing the same illness with one of their children.)

8. Which story has influenced you the most and why?

Journal Writing Options

1. Write about an experience within your own life or with another family where they rallied together to support a family member in need. Include exactly how you/they expressed support and name the virtues that were lived out.
2. Write about which story has influenced you the most and how has it changed your outlook, present and / or future plans?

Extended Activities Options

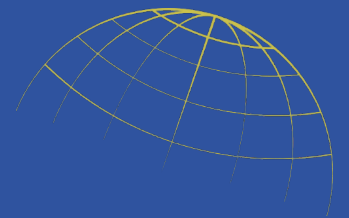
1. Organize the students into small teams and ask each team to identify an athlete, present or past, who they look up to as a positive role model. Each team should research its chosen athlete and then give a presentation to the group as a whole on what makes / made them an exceptional athlete and then how that person is a role model for us. The presentation should include naming specific virtues such as heroism, generosity, solidarity, love for others.
2. Organize the students into larger teams for debates. Suggested questions to debate are:
 - A. We should expect our professional athletes to be role models for our community. One team argues for this statement, the other against.
 - B. If a famous athlete is doing bad things in his / her personal life we shouldn't buy their jersey and other items with his/her name or team number on it. One team argues for this statement, the other against.

Debates are organized into two teams. Team 1 presents its opening statement, then Team 2 presents its opening statement. Then, Team 1 presents its first point, then Team 2 presents a counter to Team 1's first point, and then Team 2 presents its first point. Team 1 then counters Team 2's first point. Continue having the teams present their point/counter points until each has presented and countered all of their points. Conclude with each team making a closing statement.

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Connecting Virtues to Our World

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1126 Dartmouth Road, Flossmoor, IL 60422



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