

HIGHER POWER™ BASKETBALL Presentation Guide

STEP ONE: *Using an under-inflated ball that looks inflated, drop the ball to the ground, demonstrating the fact that it cannot bounce; then, follow this sequence of questions:*

1. “What’s wrong?” The answer will be that the ball is flat or the ball is not inflated.
2. “When the manufacturer made this ball, what was his intention? What did he want/expect the ball to do?” Again, the answers are obvious: “To bounce” or “To be able to use it.”
3. Then, “Why will this ball never be able to fulfill the purpose for which it was created?” Answer: “The ball is flat/empty.”
4. Finally, ask the question: “What needs to happen for this ball to be able to do what the manufacturer intended?” Answer: “The ball needs to be filled.”

STEP TWO: *From this point, turn to an inflated “Higher Power™ Ball” and begin to share the gospel using the colors of the panels. By the way, this ball is called the “Higher Power™ Ball” because the colors allow you to share the gospel and, according to the Apostle Paul, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. (Romans 1:16)*

BLUE – God is the One who has created the heavens and the seas, and He has even created you and me. This God wants to have a relationship (holy friendship) with us. (Genesis 1)

GOLD – God loves us so much that He wants this relationship/friendship to last forever. When we talk of “forever” we are talking about eternal life . . . which is spent in a place the Bible calls heaven. The color gold represents this wonderful place where God dwells. A place where there are no problems (relate this to the potential problems of the audience). A place where there is no crying (no tears), no pain or suffering . . . not even any dying. It’s a great place. (II Peter 3:9; Revelation 21:21)

SEAMS – As great a place as this is, there is a problem. God is a holy God, and we are not a holy people. We have made mistakes. We have lied. We have been angry and maybe even acted out that anger. The Bible calls these mistakes sin, and these sins separate us from God. In addition to that, these sins can “tie us up,” “bind us” just like these seams do. (Romans 3:23; 6:23) [Note: Using the color black to denote sin can be culturally and ethnically offensive; try using the “bound by sin” concept or use “dark” as a color rather than black.]

RED – Earlier we talked about how much God loves you. His love is so great that He was willing to allow His Son to take the punishment for the things you and I have done wrong. In other words, to pay the penalty for our sins, Jesus Christ – the Son of God – died on the cross and endured the punishment that we should endure. The color red represents His death and reminds us that our “sin-debt” has been paid, that Jesus Christ willingly paid for our wrongdoing. (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 6:23)

WHITE – When you believe (trust) these four things, and you are willing to acknowledge/confess/agree that you have made mistakes/sinned, and ask Jesus Christ to be your Savior, God forgives you and cleanses you from all of those mistakes/sins. White represents how God sees you now. Because of the sacrifice of Jesus, God no longer sees you as a sinner, but as a cleansed child of God. You are now forgiven and have the promise of everlasting life in heaven with God. (Isaiah 1:18; I John 1:9)

STEP THREE: *You might say: “You have a choice today . . . right now, as to whether you want to be a ball that is empty, or one that is filled with the love of God, filled with the Spirit of God, filled to become all that God wants you to be. Do you want to make that choice right now?” Be sure that, no matter how you present the gospel, you give people the opportunity to RESPOND to what has been shared. Give them the chance to say, ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to the information you have presented and to re-state any actions they take. Give them an opportunity to ask questions. If the individual is (a) prepared to confess (agree with God) that he/she is a sinner and in need of a Savior, (b) acknowledges that Jesus Christ is the One who has died to pay the penalty for those sins, and (c) is ready to receive Jesus as his/her Savior and Lord, help the individual pray (say) these things to God. Having prayed to receive Christ, affirm that, according to Scripture, this person is now a forgiven child of God who has the promise of everlasting life.*

GREEN – You have made a confession of faith in Jesus Christ and I want to assure you that you are forgiven and have the promise of heaven. However, heaven is future and you live now on earth. The Bible teaches that God has things for you to do here and now. In order to do those things, you need to grow in your faith/understanding of what it means to be a “believer,” a “Christian.” The color green represents growth . . . an increase in understanding . . . the process of maturing . . . in order to become all that God wants you to be. (II Timothy 2:15; Psalm 1:1-3; Ephesians 3; Colossians 3)

HIGHER POWER™ BASKETBALL

A Message of Life

In producing this basketball, it was the intention of the manufacturer that the ball bounce; however this ball will never bounce – and, therefore, realize the purpose for which it was manufactured . . . until it is filled.

According to the Bible, the same is true for you and me. God created us to have a relationship with Him – a relationship that would bless our life now as well as eternally. However, to experience that relationship, we, too, need to be filled. The colors of the panels of this basketball describe how we can discover that relationship – how we can be filled, forgiven and become all that God wants us to be. This “good news” story begins with the blue panel . . .

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RED – Earlier we talked about how much God loves you. His love is so great that He was willing to allow His Son to take the punishment for the things you and I have done wrong. In other words, to pay the penalty for our sins, Jesus Christ – the Son of God – died on the cross and endured the punishment that *we* should endure. The color red represents the blood He shed when He died, and reminds us that our “sin-debt” has been paid, that Jesus Christ willingly paid for our wrongdoing when He died on the cross.

WHITE – When you believe (trust) these four things, you are willing to acknowledge/confess/agree that you have made mistakes/sinned and are sorrowful about them, and then ask Jesus Christ to be your Savior, God forgives you and cleanses you from all of those mistakes/sins. Why not stop right now and talk with God (pray); tell Him you realize you need Jesus Christ in order to be forgiven. Ask Jesus to be your Savior and Lord. Then, thank God for forgiving you. The color white represents how God sees you now. Because of the sacrifice of Jesus, God no longer sees you as a sinner, but as a cleansed child of God. You are now forgiven and have the promise of everlasting life in heaven with God.

GREEN – If you have made a confession of faith in Jesus Christ, I want to assure you that you are forgiven and have the promise of heaven; however, heaven is future and you live now on earth. The Bible teaches that God has things for you to do here and now. In order to do those things, you need to grow in your faith/understanding of what it means to be a “believer,” a “Christian.” The color green represents growth . . . an increase in understanding . . . the process of maturing . . . in order to become all that God wants you to be. Therefore, find Christian friends, attend a Bible-teaching church and develop a time with God in order to pray and study His word. This is an exciting adventure. Enjoy it.

Would you like to understand more in order to respond to this good news? In one book of the Bible, the story of being forgiven and receiving everlasting life is told. You are encouraged to read and respond to this sequence of verses: Romans 3:23 (identifies our condition and the result); Roman 6:23a (identifies our problem); Romans 5:8 (declares God’s unconditional love); Romans 6:23b (identifies God’s solution for our problem), and Romans 10:9, 10 (explains how to be forgiven and have everlasting life). May God open your mind and heart to receive these truths.