

# GOAL OF LIFE: SCHOOL ASSEMBLY PLAN

(Age 11+ / Year 7+)

**Age group 11+ (Year 7 and above) | Length: 15–20 minutes**

## Theme

Pressure, identity, and purpose: what faith (and Mark's story of Jesus) has to do with football—and with us.

## Key Message

If you build your life only on performance, results, popularity, or image, it won't hold under pressure. The Bible's claim is that Jesus offers a deeper identity and a different kind of freedom—whether you're winning or losing.

## Aims

- To connect sport culture (pressure, status, success) to wider student life (grades, friendship groups, social media, expectations).
- To introduce Mark as a fast-paced eyewitness account that centres on the question: "Who is Jesus?"
- To explore the idea of identity: "What am I building my life on?"
- To offer a moment of reflection and an optional prayer, with clear signposting to support.

## Safeguarding Note:

The booklet includes real-life experiences that mention mental health, addiction, and suicide. For a whole-school/KS3 assembly, keep references general and avoid graphic detail. If a student discloses a concern, follow your school safeguarding policy and signpost pastoral support.

## Resources Needed

- A football (or image) and the Bible/booklet.
- Optional: 3–4 large prompt cards: Performance, Popularity, Possessions, Purpose.
- Optional: anonymous "pulse-check" method (hands down/head down, mini whiteboards, or a QR poll if your school allows).

## Running Order (with suggested words)

Time	Focus and Notes
0-1	<p><b>Hook: football pressure is real</b></p> <p>Hold up a football and say: "In elite football, everyone's watching: fans, cameras, commentators. One mistake can be replayed a thousand times." Then connect: "But you don't have to be a pro to feel pressure. You can feel it with grades, friendship groups, trials/teams, social media, family expectations—just being 'good enough'."</p>

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2-5	<p><b>Big question + anonymous pulse</b></p> <p>Ask: "What do you think most people your age are building their identity on?" Option A (hands down / eyes closed): Read out the four words Performance, Popularity, Possessions, Purpose. Students put a hand up to vote (keep it anonymous). Say: "Interesting. None of these are 'bad' things—but some are shaky foundations if they become the main thing."</p>
5-7	<p><b>Link to the Goal of Life: why footballers read the Bible</b></p> <p>Try Saying Something like this:</p> <p>This little book connects football and the Bible because some top players read the bible. It contains Mark, an eyewitness account of the Life of Jesus. The top players who are followers of Jesus Christ, read their bibles and pray and talk about their faith. Not because it makes them magically win—but because it gives them perspective and a steadier identity and their lives aren't built on Football but on their faith in Jesus. This helps them whether they win or lose, whether they succeed in the world's eyes or not – their identity is in something bigger – even than winning.</p> <p>For example in the Goal of Life we hear how Bukayo Saka talks about his bible saying: "It was a gift from my Dad, It's really special to me. I try to read it every night before I go to bed!"</p> <p>(If you can play the tiktok video of Bukayo Saka saying this)</p> <p>Saka is one of the Premier League's biggest stars. And, despite all his ability, skill and success, he makes the effort every night to read an ancient book and take those words to heart to guide his life and career.</p> <p>Saka is not the only Arsenal player to read the Bible regularly. In fact, he's part of a growing number of players at the club who trust the Bible to guide and inspire them so much that they have been nicknamed "The Bible Boys."</p> <p>You can add:</p> <p>In the Goal of Life you can also find the story of one footballer, Daryl Robson, describing what it's like when football becomes your 'everything'—and what happened when that foundation cracked and how he found faith.</p>

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7-11	<p><b>Bible focus: what Mark says Jesus offers</b></p> <p>Try saying: “Mark is direct. Early on, Jesus announces his message: ‘The kingdom of God has come near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news.’ (Mark 1:15 NIRV).”</p> <p>Explain briefly: “That means: God is not distant; Jesus is inviting people to turn around—away from what’s damaging—and trust him.</p> <p>This is like the footballer Daryl Robson in his story, even football was damaging him till he found faith and could find proper perspective.”</p> <p>Then add Verse on identity and eternity: “Jesus asks: ‘Whoever wants to save their life will lose it. But whoever loses their life for me and for the good news will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet lose their soul?’ (Mark 8:36 NIRV).”</p> <p>Next, make the connection: “Mark keeps pointing to the same question: if Jesus is who he says he is, then he’s worth trusting more than results or reputation.”</p>
11-14	<p><b>Interactive moment: “Foundation Test”</b></p> <p>Say: “Quick thought experiment. Imagine one of these gets taken away for a month:”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• your best skill/activity</li><li>• your phone/socials</li><li>• your ‘top set’ reputation or grades</li><li>• your main friendship group</li></ul> <p>Then ask: “Which one would shake your confidence the most—and why?” (Invite 2–3 brief responses.)</p> <p>Land it: “If one thing can collapse our whole sense of worth, it might be carrying too much weight. Christianity says your value isn’t something you earn; it’s something you receive—because you’re loved by God.”</p>

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14-17	<p><b>Reflection (and optional prayer)</b></p> <p>Invite quiet: “Take 20 seconds. No one else needs to know what you’re thinking about.” Prompts (read slowly): “What am I most afraid of losing? Where do I look for my worth? Who do I want to become?”</p> <p>Optional prayer (adapt to your school’s policy): “Jesus, if you are real, help me see what’s true. Help me not to be defined by pressure, popularity, or performance. Give me courage to ask for help when I’m struggling, and help me become someone who builds others up. Amen.”</p>
17-20	<p><b>Close + signposting</b></p> <p>Say: “If this has raised questions—or if any of the ‘heavier’ themes connect with your life—please speak to a trusted adult in school today (tutor, Head of Year, pastoral team). You don’t have to carry stuff alone.”</p> <p>Finish: “If you want to explore Mark, start by reading one short section a day. Ask: ‘What does this show me about Jesus?’ and ‘What might that mean for me?’”</p>

## Optional Follow-up (Tutor Time / RE / PSHE)

- What pressures do young people face that adults sometimes underestimate?
- When does a good thing (sport, grades, popularity) become an “ultimate thing”?
- What does it mean to base your identity on something stable?
- In Mark, what stands out about Jesus—his power, his compassion, his teaching, his claims?
- What would healthy support look like when someone is struggling (friends, staff, parents/carers, professionals)?