

Dig In

Ready:

“The kingdom of God is like this,” He said. “A man scatters seed on the ground; he sleeps and rises—night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows—he doesn’t know how. The soil produces a crop by itself—first the blade, then the head, and then the ripe grain on the head. But as soon as the crop is ready, he sends for the sickle, because harvest has come.”

-Mark 4:26-29

Set

Question: Would you rather have one incredible sports season filled with recognition and awards, or five average seasons filled with good, solid consistent performances? How we answer that challenging question reveals how we are wired as competitors. Are you the type of competitor who looks for the next big opportunity or who digs in right where you are? In the sports world today, we see players jump teams mid-season, coaches leave great programs for bigger paychecks, and even entire teams change cities. The grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence, doesn’t it? That is why we are quick to pursue the next big, great opportunity.

One of my personal core values is consistency. It is a daily gut-check to make sure day in and day out I show up and am committed to engaging where God has me. I have to keep putting my “hand to the plow” and not looking back (or around). God can use us greatly if we commit to staying put. We will grow where God has planted us if we just give it time. We have our own personal agendas and are so rushed to make a move or change the current dynamic. But God is looking for a few good athletes who will dig in and be consistent. He wants the faithful not the flashy. He wants someone who sold-out, not a sell-out. Persistent, not prosperous. Patient, not popular.

I talk to many athletes and coaches who say they want to be used by God, but they never seem to experience God’s move in their life. Come to find out they switch schools, switch teams and switch cities before God can start a mighty work through them. They don’t take the time to develop relationships and dig into the powerful community that God wants to give them. In Mark 4:26-29, the farmer was committed to doing the work day and night. He was willing to pay the price, and he reaped a great harvest. It just takes time.

I’ve seen this in my own life, and I am continually amazed how God can use someone like me in the way He has. I went to the same high school and college for all four years, played for the same professional lacrosse team my entire pro career, have been on staff with FCA for 18 years, dated my wife for nine years before we married, and Dawn and I have been married for 18 years. In each season of life, I saw God show up powerfully through an unwavering,

steadfast commitment to where God had planted me. Sure, I had opportunities that looked bigger and better, but I just kept showing up. And so did God!

Here's my challenge to you: Commit for the long haul. Don't bail. Be faithful. Dig in and make a difference. Sink your teeth into something, and be a competitor who is marked with consistency. Just start where you are and stay after it. You will be surprised what God can do with a commitment.

Go

1. When was the last time you committed to something for the long haul? How did God use you through that experience?
2. Are you more prone to digging in or taking off? Why?
3. How can God use you in your current situation (team, school, community) if you are willing to dig in?
4. Andy Stanley defines big faith as being "when our faith intersects God's faithfulness." How does that hit you? How does that apply to digging in?
5. What is one area in which you can be more consistent?

Workout

Galatians 6:9
2 Thessalonians 3:13

Overtime

Lord, develop consistency in me. I want to dig in and be counted for the long haul. You have planned to do a mighty work through me. I know You are able. Amen.



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