

Playing for the Lord

Ready:

"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people..." – Colossians 3:23

Set

As athletes, we play with the abilities God has given us. But what really drives us to play the game? For some it's the praise of parents, coaches, and friends or awards and medals. Often our self-worth and dedication to the game is driven purely on the thoughts, praises and criticisms of others.

One of the toughest parts of an athlete's performance is to be mentally focused on the game. Letting outside praise and distractions guide us will often lead to inconsistently good or poor performances. To stay mentally tough, we need to remember the race set before us—the eternal race for God's glory, not our own. This means playing with good sportsmanship, integrity, a competitive spirit, and using our talents to the best of our abilities. Focusing on Christ in sport takes a positive attitude and willingness to work harder even when we feel unnoticed. In some instances, that may mean being a team player in ways other than anticipated or hoped for; such as instead of making the winning point, we could become servants by helping our teammates improve at every practice or encourage them off the court.

In the end, God gives out the rewards. Christ calls us to be competitors for Him. He loves us when we use what He has given us to be the best we possibly can—working and playing for Him, not for others.

Go

- Do you seek praise from your teammates, coaches, parents or all of the above?
- How does the praise of others affect your performance?
- What are some tangible athletic goals you could set to better focus on playing for the Lord?

Workout

Matthew 25:14-30; Mark 9:35; John 12:26

Overtime

God, I know that I get caught up in the distractions and approval of this world. Father, help me to focus on You and the abilities You have blessed me with—to train, compete and strive to be the best while competing for You. Amen.

Bible Reference:

Colossians 3



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