

Plug and Play

Ready:

“So watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times! Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants.”

-Ephesians 5:16-17 (The Message)

Set

Have you ever heard of Plug and Play (PnP)? It's a computer capability that allows users to plug a device into a computer so that it recognizes that the device is there. The user doesn't have to tell the computer. You can just plug a device into your computer and start working or playing with no hassles. It's so easy!

After 19 years on staff with FCA, I've been blessed to work with thousands of athletes and coaches. During this time, I have seen a PnP kind of mentality manifest itself in many competitors. “If I just take this supplement or that drug, I will be ready to elevate my game. No work; no change; no effort; no sweat. I'll just plug this drug into my body, and I'll become a better athlete.”

Not long ago I saw an athlete in the gym wearing a T-shirt with the saying, “No pain; no pain.” That's right. It was obviously a play on the old adage “no pain; no gain.” I watched him for 30 minutes while I ran on the treadmill. This guy was truly living out his shirt, just talking to the ladies and visiting with the gym staff. There wasn't a drop of sweat on him. It just goes to show that the world values shortcuts as the key to success. The easy way becomes the best way—not hard work and unwavering discipline. We rely on PnP in the world of sports to get quick results without the effort.

Often, we carry the PnP mindset right into our spiritual lives. When we see the gospel presented as just a simple, quick prayer in order to add Jesus to someone's life, we see the PnP gospel at work. Just plug Him in, and He will bless you and make your life so much better. No change; no sacrifice; no confession of sin. Just plug Jesus in and keep cranking away. No pain; no pain. PnP Jesus will give you peace and even meaning to your life. Let's just add Jesus to our already well-planned-out lives...Right.

My heart breaks when I hear the gospel presented that way. We can't buy into the spiritual PnP trap. If we make Jesus Christ the Lord and Savior of our lives, we can't continue in the same sinful direction. Living in Christ involves a total redirect, stopping in our tracks and doing a 180-degree turn. We say, “God, I want to be added to YOUR plans, and I surrender my life to You.”

Often, we don't want to give up control of our lives, even to the God of the universe. We grow comfortably numb in our spiritual life. No spiritual sweat; no digging into deep spiritual truths; no pressing into the Lord to find out how to please Him. I know that I fight this mentality every

day. I love the PnP spiritual life because it is easy. But that is why I renew my mind every day in the Word of God. The only way to not get stuck in the PnP mindset is to let Christ grip your life.

Christ desires to take control of your life. Trust me, He does a better job than you. But, be forewarned: your life will not stay the same. You might have to reboot your life and stop playing games with God. But it will be so worth it.

It's time to get serious. Do some one-on-one with the Lord. He is waiting to transform you. He doesn't want to become a key part of your life, He wants to become your life.

Go

1. We all have the PnP mindset at times. When and why does it happen in you?
2. Why is it so hard to let go of control? Can you identify the things that prevent you from surrendering everything to God?
3. As a competitor, you probably know what is needed to train for your sport. How do you train and work out your soul? Go deeper than only praying and reading the Bible (both good things, but there's more). Go into detail!

Workout

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

Colossians 1:21-23

Colossians 3:2

Ephesians 5

Overtime

"Lord, I ask for a true understanding of what You want from me. You want more than for me to simply add You to my life; You want me to surrender my life to You. It is hard, and I recognize that I have a control issue because I want my life AND the life You offer. But I am choosing to acknowledge that it is one or the other. Today, I want Your plan. Become my life, Lord. In the name of Jesus I pray. Amen."

Bible Reference:

Colossians 3



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