

## **In the Zone**

n/a

### **Ready:**

“...pray continually...”

-1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV)

### **Set**

How many times have you heard it said that an athlete is “in the zone”? You know exactly what that means. Every athlete wants to get in that zone. When we’re there, we don’t feel any pain. We don’t feel exhaustion. We feel pretty close to unbeatable.

We know that we’re performing at the peak of our potential. And, once we’ve been in the zone, we work even harder to compete at that level every time we step on the court, field or track. We strive for that “in the zone” feeling. But...do we always strive for it in our relationship with Jesus?

Personally, I have to be honest and say there is often a huge difference between my athletic zone and my Jesus zone. When I am running mile repeats or doing a marathon training tempo run, I can slip into the athletic zone pretty easily. It doesn’t come as natural for me, however, to be in the zone with Jesus. It’s a hard and humbling thing to say, but it’s true. So many things can get in the way of my personal Jesus zone.

Most of us as athletes find ourselves giving our everything in our sport. After my football career, I took up endurance running. Now, whenever I’m training for a marathon everything in our home revolves around my training. The alarm goes off at 4:00 a.m., and I am out the door for my workout at 5:00. Some days I even do a second workout after school. If something comes up that conflicts with my workouts, I just don’t feel right. I feel off, and I know that something isn’t right. I’m sold out to the training.

My relationship with Jesus should be even more important and should be even more engrained in my life and routine. But, again, to be honest, I have to really focus on God. I know that I have to work—just like in marathon training—to grow in my relationship with Jesus. And the primary way to grow, in any relationship, is by spending time together.

Prayer is a perfect example. When we pray, we are spending time with Jesus. And that builds our relationship. Daily prayer time should be every bit as much of our training/workout routine as any physical activity. In fact, as maintaining a tight relationship with Christ is to be our main focus, that should come out on top of physical training on our list of priorities. If we feel off

after missing a workout, we should be so dependent on prayer that we notice the same feeling when we miss out on time with the Lord.

Today, if you want to be in the zone, pursue the Jesus zone. You'll find the rewards to be greater than you anything you'd get on the athletic field.

## Go

1. What percentage of your day is spent talking to Jesus?
2. What do you think it means to "pray continually"?
3. What distractions get in the way of your relationship with Jesus?

## Workout

- Matthew 6:9
- 1 Corinthians 14:15
- 1 Timothy 4:8
- 1 Peter 4:7

## Overtime

"Father God, today I desire to be in Your presence all day long. I pray that my relationship with You will be alive and visible to the world around me so that You may be glorified."



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