



IHL Devotionals 2024-25: Game 6

Main idea: Developing Godly discipline

By Anthony DeCarlo

What is discipline?

As hockey players, we understand that achieving success on the ice requires great discipline. Long before the puck drops on game day, we establish routines in our daily lives that prepare us to perform at our best when it matters most.

We practice our puck handling in the driveway, watch YouTube videos to study and learn from the pros, go to skate and shoot events to get more ice time, and continually search for the next drill to improve. As athletes, we will do whatever it takes to get the added edge needed to win. We know we have to be disciplined and put the work in if we're going to be successful.

It takes discipline to be successful in anything. This shouldn't come as a surprise, but it also takes discipline to follow Jesus.

Developing discipline and fundamentals

The Bible teaches us that none of us naturally seek after God (Romans 3:9-18). Anyone who is a believer in Christ finds themselves in a daily spiritual battle because the desires of your flesh (sinful nature) are at war with the spirit of God who dwells inside you (Galatians 5:17).

For us to have healthy and fruitful Christian lives for Jesus, we must put the work in. We must be disciplined, and we have to train ourselves to be Godly (1 Timothy 4:7-8). Just like hockey, we have to instill routines and habits in our daily lives that will help us to be successful in following Jesus. We're all at different points in our journeys with Jesus, but like any good athlete the Christian walk all comes down to the fundamentals.

- We need to have daily and intentional time in our Bibles.
- We need to have a daily and intentional time of prayer and fellowship with God.
- Weekly we should be attending a gospel-centered church where we worship and fellowship with the body of Christ.

In the same way our hockey fundamentals help us build our game, these three disciplines serve as the foundation for our spiritual lives. Whenever we feel that something is "off" spiritually, we can return to these principles to help us get back on track.

Takeaways

Just like our hockey training, it won't always be easy to be disciplined spiritually.

Sometimes that means saying no to something you really want to say yes to. For example, you may not be able to stay up as late on a Saturday night because you know you need to be up for church on Sunday morning. You might miss going to the Bills game with your friends because your church is having an event on Sunday during the game, and they really need some help. You may need to cut back on TV and video games to use that extra time for reading your Bible and praying. The events and distractions that will try to take you away from your Bible, your church, and your God are endless.

It takes real discipline and work to make Jesus the most important person in our lives, but He is worth it and He deserves our full commitment. He gave up His life so we could have life, He bore our sins and paid our debts and He gave us what we could never earn on our own. Jesus is worth our best effort to follow after Him.

Questions

1. Why is spiritual discipline important?
2. What will a lack of spiritual discipline mean for your life?
3. When you feel that something is “off” spiritually, what gets you back on track?
4. What are some things that are getting in the way of you following Jesus more faithfully?
(Example: watching too much TV)

Additional resources

This devo was inspired by *Disciplines of a Godly Man* by R. Kent Hughes, which would be a great resource for anyone looking to build a spiritually disciplined life in Christ ([Amazon link](#)). He covers various topics from disciplines in marriage and fatherhood to work and integrity and much more. It's something that you may find very helpful. -AD

Closing and prayer requests