



Bring It Home: Practice Makes Perfect | August 21, 2019

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

The best sports coaches are masters at figuring out what it takes to win, and breaking that down into little things that individuals can do in order to get better. The Bible isn't that much different. If you want to hear what the Bible has to say about growing and getting better, read more below.

Key Verses

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against

such things there is no law."

Discussion

Even when working with little kids, the best coaches are the ones that are able to identify the little things that individuals on the team can do to get better, in order for the team to win. Most of the time, the strategy for each player depends on what position they play. There are different things players can do, depending on their role, that can increase the team's efficiency and ability to win. Additionally, each player has strengths and weaknesses, where they can improve a particular skill within their position as well.

1. Think back to when you were younger – high school age or below – when you were involved in some sort of activity (sport, music, etc.) that involved regular practice. Do you remember making goals or practicing a certain skill over and over in order to get better?
2. Think about the best coach (or teacher) you've ever interacted with. Were they good at this skill of breaking things down into little things you could do in order to improve? Explain.

In this series, we're talking about how we can take what we learn at church home with us and apply it to our everyday lives, as well as use it to impact those around us as well. Most of us want to know how we're doing in a particular skill. We want to know if we are performing well or, at the very least, improving. We don't want to waste our time doing something we're never going to be able to improve at. While getting more hits in the batting cage, shooting extra free throws, or running a few extra laps are tangible ways we know we can improve in a sport, the Bible gives us a clear way to measure how we are growing in our faith as well.

3. If you're not improving in a skill, do you get frustrated or are you tempted to quit? Explain.
4. Why is it important to take what we are learning in church home with us, incorporating it into our everyday lives, as well as continuing to grow? In what ways do you already do this?

In Galatians 5:22-23, we read about the fruits of the spirit. It defines them as love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness and faithfulness. The truth is, most of us spend a large amount of time practicing the skills we need in sports, school, career, etc. What would it look like to spend a similar amount of time growing in our faith as well? Although the fruits of the spirit might be a little harder to measure than some of the other things we practice, within each one we can define at least a few things that could indicate individual progress.

5. Think about the amount of time you dedicate to getting better at certain things like sports. How does it compare to the time you dedicate to growing in your faith?
6. What are a few tangible ways you could "practice" to grow in experiencing the fruits of the spirit?

What's Next?

If you do one thing to wrap up the summer, examine where you think you're at with experiencing the fruits of the spirit. Ask someone close to you to weigh in. Maybe you rate yourself on a simple scale, of 1-5, and ask yourself where you see growth and where you need to focus. What would it look like to be more intentional about your spiritual growth heading into the fall, as things speed up and life gets crazy?

This week, as you live out and engage your faith, after you identify where you'd like to improve, choose a few simple ways you can practice in order to grow in those areas. Invite God to participate, and ask him for endurance and motivation as well.