



GOT GAME FOR GOD

LORDSHIP [WHO RUNS MY LIFE?]

THE HURDLE

People want so much from me. My coach expects me to give 110%. My academics call for total dedication. My family and friends—including the people I date—have their own expectations of me. When I hear that Jesus is calling for more commitment from me, I'm not certain how that is possible. If I give God 100%, will I have anything left over for my sport, academics, friends, or family? How am I to make sense of all these commitments?

What do you find most difficult about establishing priorities in your life?

Where does Jesus fit into the equation for you right now?

A star basketball player in his second year of college began a relationship with God. During a bus ride one of his coaches said, "If you spent less energy on this Jesus stuff, you'd be scoring more points on the court." It's worth asking: If you listen to Jesus' call to "love the Lord our God with all your heart" will you become a less effective athlete? Why or why not?

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The terrible thing, the almost impossible thing, is to hand over your whole self – all your wishes and precautions – to Christ.

C. S. Lewis
Author/Professor

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I HEAR YA

Even people in the Bible faced the challenge of being fully-devoted followers of God...

Israelites Turn Away: "The eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His." (2 Chronicles 16:9)

About King Josiah: "And before him there was no king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul and with all his might." (2 Kings 23:25)

John to Laodiceans: "Because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth." (Revelation 3:16)

Paul in Athens: Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this" ... but some men joined him and believed. (Acts 17:32, 34)

Jesus to disciples: "No one can serve two masters ... you can't serve God and money." (Matthew 6:24)

LISTEN UP

Read Luke 14:25-32, where Jesus issues a challenge to the multitudes to become true disciples, putting God first in their lives.

1. What do you find most shocking about Jesus' words in this passage? Why?

2. In verse 26, Jesus uses the extreme to demonstrate the degree of allegiance He requires. Why do you think He would choose these particular relationships as a test of discipleship?

3. Jesus uses the word hate as an expression that means one must love everything else, even those relationships closest to us, comparatively far less. On a scale of 1-10, where would you place the importance of Jesus in your life right now? Explain.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all			Average				Supreme value		

How does your commitment to Jesus stack up against your commitment to your sport?

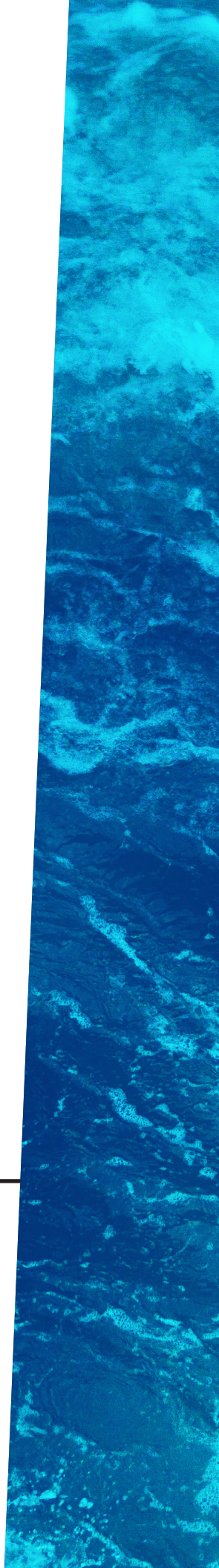
4. Jesus describes two scenarios to help disciples understand the cost involved in following him:
 - 1) A person who wants to build a tower and 2) a king who wants to fight a war.

What are the consequences of not giving adequate consideration before moving forward with these two projects? What is the consequence of a Christian athlete proclaiming the name of Christ but not following through on his/her commitment to Him?

FOR THE RECORD

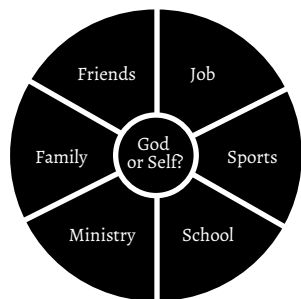
Jesus promises that when we surrender to Him as our highest priority, we'll experience life in a way simply not possible when he is second. Discipleship (following Jesus) doesn't mean we're shackled to endless misery—it means opening ourselves to the surprises of God's astonishing goodness! In placing Him first, Christ enables us to experience everything else in life more freely and purposefully: to play

with wild confidence, to deeply love others without reservation, to fully embrace moments in the day that we might otherwise miss, to take healthy risks without fear of failure, to control our passions instead of them consuming us. He knows that we struggle, but His riches await us as we turn to Him over and over again! Are you convinced He is worthy of your complete allegiance?



YOUR MOVE

1. If you examine your life closely (your use of your time and money, your affections, your commitments), what relationships or areas of life currently demand the most allegiance?



2. Look back over the chart above. What area of life are you most afraid to surrender to God? What do you fear losing if you place God in the center of your life?

3. God does not necessarily take things out of your life—He wants them in the proper order. If Jesus were really your highest priority, what adjustment would you have to make? Consider these questions to help you think through areas:

- Are there any attitudes or actions that are wrong or sinful?
- Are there any areas that may not be wrong but are not wise (wasting time)?
- Are you demonstrating your love for God by getting to know Him? How?
- How are you going out of your way to encourage and serve other people?
- Does your sport show that you are living for Christ on and off the field of play?

A prayer of commitment

Lord Jesus, thank you for loving me and dying for me so that I might have life, hope and forgiveness. You deserve my total allegiance. Even though it is scary, I give you my dreams as well as my fears and ask You to take them and do with them as you please. You are the ruler of the Universe and of my life. Please give me grace and faith to live that out today and always. Amen.

For additional work on your own, visit **The Training Room** on the next page for more exercises to keep Christ as your highest priority.

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The real problem of the Christian life comes where people do not usually look for it. It comes the very moment you wake up each morning. All your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists simply of shoving them all back; in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in.

C.S. Lewis
Author/Professor

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AS YOU ENTER

“SEEK FIRST HIS KINGDOM AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL THESE THINGS WILL BE ADDED TO YOU.” (MATTHEW 6:33)

Increase Your View of Jesus

It is easier to follow someone you trust. Read the passages and note what makes Jesus worthy of my life.

Colossians 1:15-20 _____

John 1:1-17 _____

Isaiah 40:10-31 _____

Luke 5:1-11 _____

Matthew 11:28-29 _____

Decrease your Dependence on the Approval of Others

Don't allow your life to be shaped by the same fears that motivate the unbeliever's life.

What masters call for your allegiance? (Luke 16:13)

What fears keep you from living and competing freely? (1 Peter 3:14-15)

What would it look like if you learned to play for the audience of One? (Galatians 1:10)

Increase the Areas of Life That You are Submitting to Jesus

As you grow in your devotion to God, you will want to obey His Great Commission to make disciples and His Great Commandment to love others. Evaluate the use of your time, money and talents for one week and ask yourself:

- Did it serve a higher purpose?
- Did it help build up myself, others or God's kingdom?
- Could I have done something more effectively or efficiently?
- Do I compete in a way that reflects godliness or promotes self?

AS YOU LEAVE

ASK GOD FOR GRACE EACH MORNING TO...

- » DO EVERYTHING FOR THE GLORY OF JESUS. (COLOSSIANS 3:17)
- » YIELD MY LIFE AS A LIVING SACRAFICE. (ROMANS 12:1-2)
- » HONOR GOD BY HONORING OTHERS IN EVERYTHING. (JOHN 13:5-17)