



The Way of the Spartan Warrior

8 Life Lessons from
God's Gridiron

A PLAYBOOK

From Game to Greatness

By

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Prologue

“Football is a great deal like life in that it teaches that work, sacrifice, perseverance, competitive drive, selflessness and respect for authority is the price that each and every one of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile.”

- Vince Lombardi

Like they often say in the movie business, this story is “inspired by true characters and real events.” This is a fictional story designed to entertain and inspire. However, Jesus changed the world with stories and so I guess we stand in good company.

It was also a labor of love. The authors stepped onto this playing field of storytelling to give back to the sport that gave them so much. Most of all it was fun.

This book is not just for high performance athletes and their coaches. It’s for anyone who wants to win in the game of life. Life is truly “God’s Gridiron” and “victory” (in its truest sense) is always within our reach.

Here is the premise. Everything learned on the football field today can be successfully translated into a greater life tomorrow.

This book intends to go above and beyond Coach Lombardi’s good advice. Our goal is to raise the bar, to “think beyond our thinking,” to a new level of playing and a new way of living.

Battle scars should not be just memories of the past; they should be symbols that point the way to a great life in the future.

If you are a player, this PLAYBOOK will motivate you to practice harder and become mentally and physically stronger today. Whether you are the CEO of a major business operation or a single mom trying to find money to pay her light bill, you will discover new paths to a better life today!

Football is more than a game. It is a vibrant stack of metaphors and lessons; all preparing you for an inspiring life, even after the game clock clicks to zeros.

In one respect, it is simple math. Applied lessons of God's Gridiron = a GREAT LIFE. Like all good lessons, they beg to demonstrate in our lives (or even passed on to our children and grandchildren). It will be the "gift that keeps on giving" and the coach that never leaves you.

It can be your compass that guides you through the thrill of new victories and the pain of losses...all part of a well lived life.



Football Gridiron = Life

We all have heard the stories of star athletes "falling from grace" after their playing days are over. We all know people who have tragically stepped out of the game of life and are needlessly sitting on the sidelines. This book is for them and more.

In this book there is a lot of talk about feeding. And so, we ask you a tough question that might change your life forever.

Daily, what are you feeding your mind? Are you feeding it junk food from the internet and social media or are you starving it with no food at all? When you wake up in the morning, you probably eat a healthy breakfast. However, what nourishing thoughts are you daily feeding your mind?

You wake up and dress for the day. And yet, what time or attention do you give to your "garments of your mind?"

What are your daily rituals? What are your daily meditations? What are you asking for your prayers?

We submit to you that we all have two stomachs. One is for food and the other is for thought. One is in your gut and the other is in your head.

Here's the kicker. The one in your head is more important because it is closer to God. You have (between your ears) the most powerful computer in the universe and most of us are not even opening this laptop and turning it on.

What a tragedy this is!

And here is the good news. Once you feed your mind, its nutrients bleed down into your heart and you become superhuman.

Like Jesus said, "you can do even greater miracles than I."

If you aren't excited about this idea, I urge you to close this book and go check your Facebook or twitter feeds. This book is not for you!

The story in this book is fiction, however, it is also what Joseph

Campbell called it "the hero's journey." We are all on a similar path. This book is a story about your life! It is an elaborate parable, designed to create the answers to these three questions.

- 1) What do I want?**
- 2) What does that look like?**
- 3) What am I feeding my body and mind...to get there?**

Do this and you will be a rocket blasting off from earth. No one will have to motivate you to get in motion or work hard because your rocket fuel is your connection to God. You will be beyond discipline. Your hard work will become pleasure and your sacrifices will become a sacred journey and mission.

Here is one word of advice.

Do not do anything in life without first establishing an intention. Your intention is for your laser focus. Don't eat a meal without first saying grace... intending to gloriously feed your body, mind, and soul. Don't start a practice, workout, or meeting without intending it to be your best and most productive session ever. Don't fall asleep with first intending it to be your most restful sleep of your life. Don't even enter a room without first intending to connect with everyone there with humility, presence, and grace.

When you live life with intention, you bring the "gift of you...in everything you do!" Let your light shine and authentically play the music of "who you are" and it will bless the world and reflect to you tenfold.

As you will see by the end of this book, football is a shining example of how to establish the intention of becoming a Champion on or off the playing field.

And so, continually expecting more, raises the bar. Ask yourself “what is the next level in my life?” Adopt a mindset of a “work in progress” obsessed with growing in God’s garden. Be like a glorious oak tree whose only divine assignment is to GROW and reach for the heavens! How wonderful life is! And so...live it to the fullest.

Line up for kickoff and let the games begin.

Be Legendary,

--- John and Zo

Notes: What do you hope to get out of this book? What are your intentions?

List three:

Answer the following questions:

- 1) **What do I want?**
- 2) **What does that look like?**
- 3) **What am I feeding my body and mind...to get there?**

Acknowledgements

“At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”

Albert Schweitzer

God works in mysterious ways. When I emailed my good friend Zo and told him that I had finished the first draft of this book, I suddenly realized that it was Memorial Day Weekend.

How appropriate.

Accordingly, there are many people we would like to remember and thank. It was their bravery and relentless courage that inspired these pages.

This book is about inspirational life warriors.

We both would like to thank the soldiers and sailors who sacrificed life and limb to make our country safe and great.

We would like to thank our families (wives, siblings, and parents) who “fought the good fight” to give us a home and a good place to love, learn and grow.

We would also like to thank all our teammates and coaches who taught us so much about this playground called Life.

Lastly, we would like to thank that “Big Guy in the Sky” who made this dance with Destiny possible.

Thank you, God, for your “light that shows the cracks in our armor.” (You will understand this more after you read this book.)

Go Green!