

## Session 1

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# WHAT IS YOUR GAME PLAN?

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### *Finding God in the Midst of Frustrated Plans*

#### WHAT EACH PERSON WILL NEED:

- Bible
- Pen
- His driver's license or photo ID
- *Quiet Strength: Men's Bible Study* guide

## THINK ABOUT IT *(20 minutes)*

To get this session started, and to get to know each other a little more, allow each person to share a dream he had when he was in high school. For example, you may have dreamt of being an actor or that you would one day marry the head cheerleader. If men in your group are still in high school, have them share dreams they had when they were in grade school. If some of your group members haven't met, make sure you each share your name and the reason you came to this group.



*No decent coach plans to have a losing season. Even the coaches who see talent gaps on their teams strive to*



*When you see this icon, have someone in your group read the section aloud as others follow along.*

*Pass your books around the room, and have each person write his name, phone number, and e-mail address in the space provided on page 70 of this book.*

*overcome the odds to lead their teams to the Big Game. In the NFL, 32 coaches start the season with a plan to win the*

*Super Bowl, and 31 of them fail—every year.*

*Before leading the Indianapolis Colts to a Super Bowl championship following the 2006 season, Tony Dungy had his share of failed plans. His 2001 season as head coach for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers wasn't exactly a losing season. In fact, they made it to the playoffs. And that's when they lost and became one of the 31. So when Coach Dungy was fired after the stinging playoff loss following that season, he knew God's plans were different than his own. For all he could tell, his NFL career was over.*



*Is life turning out like you hoped it would? Are things going according to your game plan? Or maybe you've never created a specific plan or goal for your life; you just had a vague idea of where you'd like to be at this time in your life. For each of the areas on the next page, take a moment to jot down some thoughts about where you are in life and how that compares to where you thought you'd be. This table is just between you, God, and this book—so be honest. Take five to 10 minutes to go through this inventory.*

<i>Life Area</i>	What I Planned	Where I Am
<i>Career/school</i>		
<i>Family</i>		
<i>Skills/education/experience</i>		
<i>Finances</i>		
<i>Friends/relationships</i>		
<i>Faith/ministry</i>		

## TALK ABOUT IT

(10 minutes)



*Maybe a few things on the right side of your chart are a little disappointing to you...or maybe—hopefully—some of the items in the right column have actually turned out better than you planned. For better or worse, it's highly likely that many of the events and ideas about your life haven't worked out exactly according to plan.*

*Imagine that your life thus far is one football season of 10 games. The plan was*

*"It was hard to figure. My family had come to Tampa for a reason. God had led us here, opened doors that we didn't expect would be open, and allowed us to connect deeply with this community. But for what purpose?"*

*"Not football, apparently. I felt certain that the Buccaneers were my best, and possibly last, chance to lead an NFL team. For whatever reason, God had closed the door. For what?"*

*—Tony Dungy  
Quiet Strength*

*to win all 10 games, but how would you say you're really doing? What is your life "record" right now? Maybe you have a happy family, a safe home, and some frustrations at work. You could say your current record is 8-2. Share and explain your record with everyone in the group.*

When everyone has finished, discuss:

- HOW HAVE YOUR PLANS FOR LIFE BEEN INTERRUPTED OR THWARTED?
- HOW HAS LIFE TURNED OUT BETTER THAN EXPECTED?
- READ PROVERBS 16:3 AND 9. HOW HAVE YOU SEEN GOD'S HAND IN BRINGING YOU TO WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?
- DO YOU THINK GOD WOULD GIVE YOU THE SAME "RECORD" YOU GAVE YOURSELF? WHY OR WHY NOT?

## USELESS TRIVIA



You probably know that the current NFL regular season lasts 16 games. In the 1920s professional teams didn't have set schedules and could play as few as eight games. The NFL has had a 16-game regular season schedule since 1978. Which two years since 1978 have seen fewer than 16 games in the regular season and why? (See page 71 for the answer.)

## STUDY IT *(15 minutes)*



*In an episode of the show Blue Collar TV, comedian Jeff Foxworthy joked that every guy was "almost" a professional*

*athlete in some sport. Injuries, angry coaches, or the lack of desire stopped them. There are hundreds of thousands of high school football players who dream of playing in the NFL and only 1,696 active positions in the NFL in any season. Only a very select few will realize their plan to play professional sports. We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps. Let's look at a man in the Bible who had a drastic change in plans.*

Read Acts 9:1-19. Discuss:

- ➊ WHAT DO YOU THINK SAUL WAS THINKING AND FEELING WHEN VERSES 5-6 AND 9 TOOK PLACE? EXPLAIN.
- ➋ COMPARE AND CONTRAST SAUL'S PLAN IN VERSES 1-2 WITH GOD'S PLAN IN VERSES 15-16. WHAT DOES YOUR COMPARISON SUGGEST ABOUT HOW GOD WORKS IN OUR LIVES?
- ➌ HOW HAS GOD INTERRUPTED YOUR GAME PLAN FOR LIFE? WHAT GOOD HAS COME OR MAY COME FROM THAT INTERRUPTION?
- ➍ HOW CAN THAT KNOWLEDGE HELP YOU WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER FUTURE INTERRUPTIONS?

#### USEFUL TRIVIA



The Bible doesn't say that God changed Saul's name to "Paul." Why did Saul's name change to "Paul" starting with Acts 13? (See page 71 for the answer.)

## LIVE IT *(15 minutes)*



*In his book Quiet Strength, Coach Dungy says, “God had already selected the team I would be coaching. I just needed to do my current job well, keep preparing, and wait on God’s timing. I needed to trust His leadership, rather than try to force an outcome I wanted.” You may have dreams to move to a different city, to change jobs, to launch a ministry, or to change things in your family. It’s important to chase those dreams. It’s just as important to understand where God has you right now and to find what God wants you to do right where He has you. Your life and ministry start right now.*

Get in groups of two to four. Pull out your driver’s license. Take a look at the date it was issued. Discuss how your life has changed since that date.

Take a look at the expiration date. Discuss what you hope happens in your life by that date.

Take a look at your picture. Discuss how you can best serve God where He has you *right now* in life.

- ❶ READ EPHESIANS 2:10. WHAT DO YOU THINK GOD WANTS YOU TO DO TODAY? THIS MONTH? THIS YEAR?
- ❷ HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GET STARTED?

Put all of the driver’s licenses facedown in the middle of the table. Each person should pick up one license. Pray together that God will help you bounce back from frustrated plans and move

forward with plans He has for you now. Each person should pray for the person whose license he picked up.

## COMMIT TO IT

Before you conclude this session, choose to complete one of the action points that follow or another action point you come up with. Commit to completing the action point before your next meeting, and be prepared to share what happened or what you learned.

**OPTION 1:** Read chapters 1-3 of Tony Dungy's *Quiet Strength*. Highlight or underline each example where life didn't go exactly as Coach Dungy had planned.

**OPTION 2:** It's easy to get frustrated when we look at how life hasn't gone according to our game plan. It's important to remember that God's plan for you is better than any plan you dream up. Read Jeremiah 29:11, then make a list at the bottom of this page of all the things you're grateful for.

**OPTION 3:** Find out how you're really doing by asking the people you impact. Follow the example in this session's Talk About It section on page 15 to find your "record" in the following areas:

- ➊ ASK YOUR SPOUSE WHAT YOUR RECORD WOULD BE IF YOUR MARRIAGE SO FAR WERE A 10-GAME SEASON.
- ➋ ASK YOUR PARENT OR CHILD

*"Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities."*

—Matthew 25:23

WHAT YOUR RECORD WOULD BE IN TERMS OF YOUR SUPPORT OF THE FAMILY.

- ② ASK YOUR FRIEND WHAT YOUR RECORD WOULD BE IN TERMS OF SUPPORTING HIM OR HER AS A FRIEND.