



CHANGING LIVES BEYOND THE GRIDIRON

with Patrick Nix

▶ FOCUS VERSE

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
Romans 8:28

▶ DISCUSSION

1. **Early on Patrick talks about how his father, a high school head coach, would always sweep the locker room before heading home on a Friday night. (See *Philippians 2:4-11.*)**
 - a. Are there any jobs or tasks you take on even though some might consider them “beneath your station”?
 - b. Why is it important to you to do those things?
 - c. If not, is there anything you could be doing to show humility or a willingness to be a team player? (See *Philippians 2:3.*)
2. **Patrick had to wait nearly three full seasons at Auburn before he started getting meaningful playing time, but when he did, they were important opportunities that he made the most of. (See *Psalms 27:14.*)**
 - a. Have you had to wait for advancement opportunities where you work?
 - b. Did the wait ever become frustrating?
 - c. Were the opportunities that came along worth the wait, in the sense that they helped you grow and make the most use of your skills? (See *Hebrews 12:3.*)



- 3. Patrick describes himself as a “Luke 2:52 coach”—someone who tries to teach his players to, as the gospel of Luke says, “[grow] in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.”**
- Have you tried to grow in a similar way, or teach others to do so?
 - If not, have you ever thought about things you could be doing to grow in that way?
- 4. In your line of work, have you ever had to work with or manage people who differed substantially from you in age, experience, or background? (See *Hebrews 12:14.*)**
- Were there any conflicts that resulted from this, and how did you deal with them?
- 5. Patrick talks about how being open about his faith where he worked helped other people find the courage to express their faith openly as well. (See *Hebrews 12:1-2.*)**
- Are you similarly open about your beliefs?
 - If not, is there someone at your workplace or in your community whose example you could follow the way some people followed Patrick’s?
- 6. Patrick says his dad’s firing as a high school coach in Albertville was a major moment in his life; among other things, it taught him that even the bad things that happen to us in life can be part of God’s larger plan. (See *Romans 8:28.*)**
- Can you think of something good in your life that wouldn’t have happened without something bad that preceded it?
 - How did you feel when you were experiencing that initial misfortune, and how do you feel now, looking back with the benefit of hindsight and seeing the good that has resulted?
 - Has it changed your relationship with God in any way?
- 7. Patrick recalls that when he was fired at the University of Miami and had a lot more time to spend at home, he realized what he’d been missing because he’d spent so much time at work. (See *Matthew 6:33.*)**
- Is there anything you feel like you’re missing out on now—whether it’s with your spouse, children, extended family, or friends—because of the time you’re devoting to work?

