

## **Don't Leave My Side**

n/a

### **Ready:**

"Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded people!"

-James 4:8

### **Set**

When I was a freshman in college, I heard this a lot. It was a one-sided conversation from my coach, and it went something like this: "If you want to get in the game, don't leave my side. Stay right next to me. When I need a defensive lineman, I'm only going to yell once."

This was a great coaching technique. In fact, I liked it so much that I used it myself when I became a coach, and it usually resulted in one or two players following me around like lost puppies. Recently, when I read James 4:8, I was reminded of these days. This verse tells us that when we come near to God, He will come near to us.

In the game of life we will all be on the field at some point. There will come a day when we are put into circumstances that will define us as humans and as Christians. It is for these times—just like critical times in athletic contests—that we had better be ready.

Athletes get ready for these crunch times by spending time with and drawing near to their coach, and we should do the same with God. Jeremiah 30:17 tells us that God will heal us and restore our health. In times of great temptation and spiritual battle, shouldn't we be as spiritually healthy and prepared as we can possibly be? In Psalm 23:3 we also read that God refreshes our souls. As coaches, when we put athletes into games, we are counting on them to be fresh and ready to get the job done. When step onto the field for Jesus, He expects us to be as fresh as we can be.

As an athlete, I always wanted to be on the field. As a coach, I always wanted my athletes to want to be on the field. I also wanted them to be as fresh and in shape as possible so that they could give all that they had for the team. Shouldn't we want the same from ourselves when we step into the battle for Jesus?

Today, examine your intimacy and proximity to God. In order to stay spiritually fresh and get in the game, you have to stay by His side.

### **Go**

1. What does it mean to draw near to God?
2. How often do you draw near to Him during the week?

3. From where do you get your strength?

4. Are you putting as much effort into drawing near to God as you are into this week's athletic game plan, job or hobby? What is more important?

### **Workout**

Job 22:23

Psalm 41:3

Psalm 51:12

Psalm 71:20

Psalm 80:7

### **Overtime**

"Father God, today we thank You for allowing us to be a small part of Your greater plan. Help us to seek You first. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen."

### **Bible Reference:**

James 4



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