

## **Keep Swinging**

### **Ready:**

*"A man who endures trials is blessed, because when he passes the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him." - James 1:12*

### **Set**

A rush of relief ran through the crowd as the ball pinged off my brother's bat, bouncing through the left field grass. When he reached first base, his teammates roared in approval.

Was it the hit that brought in the winning run? Did it seal a championship victory?

No.

It was actually his first hit of the season. He had been in what we baseball people call a "hitting slump" - out after out, swing after swing, when ball and bat refuse to cooperate. And as player after player got their share of doubles, triples and RBI, my brother's average stuck to zero.

He kept persisting, though, even when the odds stretched smaller for playing time and we all wondered what God was doing. But what impressed me was the eternal perspective he carried through the slump when he told me, "I'm able to just play the game, and I know life is bigger than a high school hit."

He knew God's plan for his struggle was beyond what we see in human success. His number one role on the team was to show God to his teammates, in whatever form necessary. His steadfast faith that God was working in him through this hitting drought provided more of a ministry to teammates, coaches and fans than perhaps a .450 batting average ever could.

God often allows challenges so His light shines in the circumstances, while refining our character in the process. Don't get me wrong, it was a celebration when Charlie broke his hitless streak, but the real win came in God's whispers to trust and allow Him to do His work.

No matter what slump you find yourself in, keep swinging. God will come through.

### **Go**

1. Can you remember a season of life where you seemed to be in a perpetual slump?
2. How did you keep working to get out of it?
3. How can you notice God working behind the scenes for you?
4. In what ways can you let God take control of frustrating life moments?

### **Workout**

- Hebrews 10:35
- 2 Timothy 2:1
- Revelation 2:3

## Overtime

God, thank You that You work differently than our human minds expect You to. Thank You that You have lessons for us to learn in the slumps of life, and that it's there where you do Your best redemption work. May we be mindful of Your voice in our dry seasons. Amen.

### Bible Reference:

James 1:12

Hebrews 10:35

2 Timothy 2:1

Revelation 2:3



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