

My Stronghold (1 of 3)

Ready:

“The Lord is my light and my salvation-whom should I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life-of whom should I be afraid?” Psalms 27:1 (HCSB)

Set

There is a nice country dirt road loop in which my chocolate lab Abbie and I run to do our training runs that is just over a mile long. Along this route we also have a few homes and dogs that are usually friendly and don't bother us, but there is one particular home that has a dog and for whatever reason doesn't particularly like Abbie.

It usually comes sprinting across their property at full speed directly right at Abbie and nips at her as it screams by at full speed. Abbie, being a loving caring lab, usually just does enough to protect herself from aggression and to fend off the attack and continues on. Eventually after many times of this continuous cycle day after day and lap after lap Abbie started to break off from running with me when we approached this home and take a 'scenic route' in an adjacent field that was well far enough away from the dog that the dog wouldn't even bother to chase her.

Abbie would then come back around and join back up with me later down the road. This went on for quite a while until one day when we were making the turn towards the property I noticed that although the dog was outside Abbie didn't take her usual 'scenic route' she just kept running alongside me. Soon enough the dog came sprinting out towards us and as the sprinting dog at full speed drew near, Abbie, like a horse leaving a starting gate at the beginning of a race, took off full speed directly towards the approaching dog. The dog, like a retreating army running scared, turned and fled back to the house. Abbie seeing the retreat turned to join back up with me and while I was yelling "good girl Abbie!" she seemed to be almost smiling while she pranced alongside me.

This is very similar to the scenic route that I took for 5 years before I started my first FCA huddle. God was quietly calling me to start a huddle and year after year I managed to put it off and make up excuses to myself and to God. I would start off each year with great ambitions until the enemy would start nipping at my ankles and giving a harsh bark and eventually I would start taking the 'scenic route' in getting a huddle started.

Our scenic routes include:

- "Well I've only been a head coach for a year at this school...I should wait until I'm more established within the school."
- "I'm only an assistant coach and should wait until I'm in more of leadership role as a

head coach before I start such an endeavor.”

- “I’m an underclassman, when I’m a senior then I’ll be in the right position as a leader in my school and team to start that huddle.”
- “If only I was a team captain then I would be in a position to start that huddle.”
- “I’m only a manager of the team and not a player; it should be a player who starts the FCA huddle in my school.”
- “When I become an Administrator or Athletic Director after years of coaching then I’ll be in a good leadership position to start a huddle for coaches and players.”

The scenic routes the enemy supplies are endless and we take full advantage of using them instead of bolting out of the starting gate towards the enemy and taking the call-of-duty head on as we expect athletes, players and coaches to do in their sporting endeavors.

The truth is if we do not have the courage to stand in faith and arise to the call of obedience in our current positions then most likely we will not do it once we reach the battle line as leaders either. Abbie decided one day that she had enough of the ‘scenic route’ and was tired of running the long way around the enemy and just decided that it was time to stop being fearful of an ankle biter aggressor with a mean bark and take it head on as we should in starting the thing that we know the Lord is calling us to do.

Write “STRONGHOLD” on your phone banner, computer screen, office wall, doorposts, and mirrors or wherever you need a constant reminder that I will do the thing in which the Lord is calling me to do for Him.

Go

1. You hear the call and His persistent still small voice, but yet has another school year or sports season past by?
2. Be honest with yourself and with God and list the excuses, fears, or obstacles that have been making you take the ‘scenic route’ every year. (Pray over this list and surrender it to Christ)
3. I’m I an athlete/coach who is a Christian or am I a Christian who is an athlete/coach?

Workout

- John 4:35 (HCSB)
- Luke 10:2-3 (HCSB)
- Isaiah 42:6-9 (HCSB)

Bible Reference:

John 4



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