

Toughness Pt. 1

Ready:

"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."
Matthew 26:39

Set

Jay Bilas, an ESPN basketball analyst, wrote an outstanding book entitled, *Toughness*. In it, he shapes the definition of toughness by claiming that the tough athlete exhibits trust, courage, commitment and acceptance of a role.

Although Jesus is often viewed as a kind and loving man, we need to consider that He also showed toughness. So if we want to be more Christlike, we should examine the toughness He showed.

In Matthew 26, we see Jesus in an intensely difficult situation. He knew He was less than 24 hours away from a torturous death. Yet, the verse shows us that He trusted His Father and was committed to His mission. He accepted the role of the sacrificial lamb, our Savior. He showed courage when He told His captors that He could call on angels to save Him, but He would face what He had to face.

When your first reaction is to disagree with your coach's strategy, will you let go and trust, or will you give a half-hearted effort to a game plan you don't believe in?

Bilas said, "Being committed... means that I will keep going when it is difficult and I won't give in." When you are in a shooting slump or losing streak, how committed to excellence are you?

If the first pitch you see is aimed at your head, how courageous will you be on the next pitch?

When your role on the team turns out to be sixth man or third-string linebacker, will you accept that role and give your best effort? Will you pout about not being a starter and play with a poor attitude when you do get in? Will you be a cheering teammate for those in the game?

Will you accept your role?

These are high standards. We won't achieve them perfectly, but God loves us anyway, which is why His children should want to please Him.

Go

1. Have you had a misguided idea of what toughness means?
2. Bilas said, "Toughness has nothing to do with how nice a person is. "Why do you agree

or disagree?"

Workout

Psalm 118:14; Romans 16:5

Overtime

Dear Jesus, thank you for how tough You were on this earth. Thank You for the example You set for us. Help us to be Your kind of tough in and out of our competing and training. In Jesus' name, amen.



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