

## **Don't Defeat Yourself**

### **Ready:**

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

-Galatians 6:2

### **Set**

The Rebels and the Whales met in the second round winners' bracket of a double elimination softball tournament. In the bottom of the first inning the Whales had runners on first and third with two outs. The batter hit a shot deep into right centerfield that was sure to score two runs and give the Whales a two-run lead. However, the runner on first left too early and was called out. In the bottom of second inning with two outs and the bases loaded, a Whales player lined a seed into the left centerfield gap, which would have scored at least two runs, but the batter was called out for stepping on home plate. In the top of the third, a close call went the way of the Rebels, turning what could have been the third out into a six-run, two-out rally for the Rebels. The Whales' pitcher struggled with what he suggested to be an inconsistent home plate umpire, and the entire Whales team reacted when the base umpire revealed he had previously been a member of the Rebels. A few errors later, both mental and physical, the Rebels run-ruled the Whales 18 to 7.

Working their way through the consolation bracket, the Whales met up with the Rebels once again for the right to play in the championship game. Under the same umpires, the Whales lost a critical close call and committed seven fielding errors, but this time they won the game 15 to 11. What made the difference in the outcome? Attitude. While working their way through the consolation bracket, the Whales had developed team unity--a brotherhood--and had realized that they were responsible for encouraging one another when negative things happened rather than issuing loud disgusted sighs. The Whales excited one another's spirits, and they refused to let their teammates hold their burdens alone.

This is exactly what God wants us to do for one another. When a brother is down, don't kick him, encourage him and lift him up. Invigorate his spirit. We are God's children and are called to be a part of His loving family. He will never let us down, and in turn, we should try our best to inspire others in the way He has inspired us.

### **Go**

1. When playing team sports, have you seen one key moment in a game affect the entire outcome of the game?
2. As a competitor, how can you reach out to your team members in times of despair and give them the encouragement and love that comes from a personal relationship with Christ?
3. As a Christian, how can you reach out to the unchurched world and help shoulder others' burdens?

### **Workout**

1 Thessalonians 5:11-18

2 Timothy 4:2

Hebrews 3:13

**Bible Reference:**

Hebrews 3



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