

## **Faith**

### **Ready:**

“My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,’ says the Lord. ‘And my ways are far beyond anything you can imagine.’” -- Isaiah 55:8

### **Set**

We met in Kouvola, Finland at the Veterans Greco-Roman Wrestling World Championships. Michael at 120 kg and myself at 58 kg discovered as we talked, that God had sent us both there. He said that God told him to help the people of Kouvola. His wife was home with their newborn baby praying for him. I knew I was meant to be in Kouvola, but I was still unsure of why. My wife, Ginny, and I had been cautioned by a local Christian not to share our faith in public because it could be dangerous. What I learned during my time in Kouvola will forever stick with me. Through God, a tragic event turned into something amazing.

Friday evening, Michael asked me to be in his corner to coach him. Saturday morning, he won his first match. During his second match, he began to struggle. His skin color became red, he stumbled and collapsed on the mat. Several minutes of medical assistance was given. Everyone watched horrified and confused. Sadly, Michael did not survive. It was at this time, I saw Ginny walk to the head table, ask for the microphone and start to speak to the crowd. She told them “Michael believed in Jesus, he knew the Lord, and is now with the Lord in Heaven. He is alright. He is singing with the angels.” Spontaneously, a subtle but sure sound of applause was heard throughout the arena.

Sunday, the final day of competition, we were praying for Michael’s family. During the day, Ginny noticed a woman following her. That evening as the team boarded the bus for the last time, the woman pulled Ginny aside. We waited. Finally, Ginny joined us. The woman told her that what Ginny had said changed the people of Kouvola. God’s message had been delivered.

I learned that day that no matter what space we may step into, God is with us. That no matter what tragic event happens, God’s plan is always on track and in the forefront. I learned that God is always in control and never leaves our side. As you compete on your field of play today, remember, have faith—God is with us.

### **Go**

- Where is God nudging you to go?
- How does Hebrews 11 encourage us?

### **Workout**

Isaiah 55:8-9; Ephesians 5:20; Jeremiah 29:11-13; 1 Corinthians 9:25

### **Overtime**

“Thank You, God, for the faith the You give us and Your Holy Spirit to guide us. May You be glorified in all that we do.”

### **Bible Reference:**

Isaiah 55:8



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