

## **Forgive and Advance**

### **Ready:**

“...First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.” – Matthew 5:24

### **Set**

In September 2015, Washington Nationals pitcher Jonathan Papelbon lost his temper with teammate Bryce Harper. When Harper hit a flyout late in a game and didn't hustle to first base, Papelbon took exception to his lackluster effort. After exchanging words, Papelbon started choking Harper and put him into a wall. Years later, Papelbon said in an interview that there are now no hard feelings toward Harper, and he hopes to catch up with him the next time they cross paths.

No matter our spiritual status, we are all human and broken by sin. This means we will not always see eye-to-eye with everyone, including teammates. Disagreements between teammates can lead to anything from brawls to hostility in the locker room. During His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus addressed this specifically. He said if you present your sacrifice at the altar, and your brother has something against you, leave and reconcile with your brother, then make the offering ([Matthew 5:23-24](#)).

As an athlete or coach, one of your unique sacrifices to God is the effort and sweat you put into your sport. Disagreements between people on the team can only break down relationships. Our lives in Christ, however, should lead us to be humble, seek forgiveness and forgive. Restoring the relationship is more important to the Lord than the effort or sweat.

Let us try to honor the Lord in all our relationships, even when they have rough spots. Then, the sacrifice will be much more meaningful.

### **Go**

- Have you ever had a teammate you didn't get along with? What happened?
- Why is it important to forgive and seek forgiveness?
- How can that reconciliation affect the team or affect you?

### **Workout**

[Matthew 5:21-24](#)

[Colossians 3:12-13](#)

### **Overtime**

“Father, I am so unworthy of forgiveness, yet You forgave me. Help me to be quick to forgive and seek forgiveness and to love You by loving others. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”



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