

## **God Gave You a Spare**

### **Ready:**

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?”

-Romans 8:35

### **Set**

As coaches, we have a rule on our hockey team. If you get hurt during play, you must do your utmost to stay involved in the play or get yourself to the bench. We expect this not because we are hard-nosed or don't care about the well-being of our players, but because we expect our athletes to persevere and work through adversity.

Recently, our team was watching two other teams play when one of the players was body-checked. The player just lay down on the ice. His team was under an offensive attack from the opposition and needed him to get back in the play or get himself to the bench for a substitute. It appeared that he may not be hurt too badly but that he had, instead, just quit trying when his team needed him. I commented in a light-hearted fashion to our team that the only way we would be carrying one of them off the ice was if they had a broken leg and that they'd better do what they could to stay involved, even playing on one leg if they had to (exaggeration for effect!). At that point one of our players commented about playing on one leg. He said, “Well, God gave you a spare!”

Our response to serving God needs to have this same level of commitment. When the apostle Paul was writing his letter to the Romans, he quoted the Psalmist who had written about Israel's suffering constant hostility because of their relationship with the Lord: “Yet for your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered” (Psalm 44:22). Paul goes on to encourage us as believers in Christ that “We are more than conquerors,” and “that neither death nor life, neither angels or demons, neither the present or the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

Today, stay in God's game despite the circumstances. He will always give you the power of the Holy Spirit to protect and sustain you.

### **Go**

1. Are you prepared to commit your life to serving Jesus in all circumstances, despite hardship, pain, loss, persecution and loneliness?
2. Are there times when you try too hard on your own and feel like you're failing instead of reading God's Word and praying?

3. Have you seen a fellow believer in a situation of hardship in sports or in life outside of sport? Have you considered asking that person how you can pray for them or offering to listen to them?

### **Workout**

Philippians 3:12-14  
James 1:12

**Bible Reference:**  
James 1



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