

The Hardest Thing in Sports

n/a

Ready:

“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

-Philippians 2:1-4 (NIV)

Set

If you had to guess, what would you say is the hardest thing to do in sports? Win a national championship? Go undefeated for a season? Maybe just winning your conference if the competition is tough. Or, you could say it is an individual action like sinking a hole-in-one or hitting a 90-mph fastball. To be honest, though, I would have to say that none of these is the hardest thing to do in sports. I personally think the toughest thing we can do is to play and coach like Jesus.

Now, hopefully we all understand that competing for and like Christ doesn't involve being a doormat. The Bible I read doesn't tell me to be a pushover for the competition. If we look at the verses from Philippians 2:1-4, we see a description of how we are to compete for His glory.

First, we are to do nothing out of selfish ambition. That means we are not to desire winning for the sake of winning. We are supposed to play and compete so that the world around us might see God more clearly. When we are finished, we are to give God the glory, regardless of the outcome. We are not to glorify ourselves in any way. He blessed us with all we have, therefore, He should get the glory.

Next, we are to humbly consider others better than ourselves. Since we know God gave us all we have, we realize that we've done nothing to deserve any of our athletic abilities. That being said, we shouldn't consider ourselves better than anyone else. We aren't more special than any other athlete or coach in the game of life. We are all creations of the Creator.

My challenge to you is to pray about becoming all that God wants you to be as a competitor—coach or athlete. Let Him shine through you in competition and become a light for Him in the world of sports. The next time you step on the field, examine how hard it is for you to not draw attention to yourself and to treat others the way you want to be treated. Then listen to the Spirit's leading and respond to Him in humility.

Go

1. How are you serving God in your athletics?
2. Where do you find the strength to play or coach like Jesus?
3. Are you proud of the gifts God has given you or are you just proud of you?

Workout

Proverbs 11:2

Matthew 11:29

Mark 10:45

Overtime

“Father I pray that today, when I compete, it would be for Your glory and not my own. I pray that I would represent You in all my actions, both to my teammates and my opponents. Let me be a light for You in a dark world. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

Bible Reference:

Philippians 2



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