

Making Cuts

Ready:

??if you confess with your mouth, ?Jesus is Lord,? and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. With the heart one believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses, resulting in salvation. Now the Scripture says, No one who believes on Him will be put to shame, for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, since the same Lord of all is rich to all who call on Him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. ?But how can they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe without hearing about Him? And how can they hear without a preacher? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How welcome are the feet of those who announce the gospel of good things!? -Romans 10:9-15

Set

As the boys basketball coach at my high school, I always got excited when the leaves began to fall and a chill started to fill the air. This meant that basketball season was right around the corner and that I would have the opportunity to prepare young men for another season of round ball.

Open gyms started winding down, coaches meetings started taking place, and young men were getting in shape for the first day of tryouts. Being the head coach was a wonderful experience for the seven years I coached. I loved preparing the men for ?battle? and experiencing the highs and lows of winning and losing. There was always adversity, and every team had different issues to overcome, but I always enjoyed the challenge of helping them to get back up after being knocked down.

For me, the hardest part of the job wasn?t losing in OT or dealing with rifts within the team. By far, the most difficult part was the first two days of practice when I would have to tell some players that they didn?t make the team. Our policy when making cuts was to bring every player in to let them know whether they made the team or not. Seeing the pain in their eyes when I gave them the bad news always made my heart sink. We always encouraged them to work hard and try out again next season, but most of them decided not to come back out. I always wished we could keep 20 to 25 kids, but there weren?t enough uniforms, and playing time would have been limited. Have you ever been cut from a team like that? It?s not fun at all. But sometimes it?s inevitable.

The coaches have to make tough decisions based on factors like the uniforms and time on the court. Sometimes, in sports, there are just necessary cuts. But here?s the great news. In life, Christ?our ?Coach??has a team, and everyone who tries out makes it! He gives a uniform to everyone who wants to join! Unlike a basketball team, there is always room for more players, and our Coach even wants us to go out and recruit more (Mark 16:15). He also wants His

players to work hard in practice and know the offense (2 Timothy 2:15). He wants us to always strive to be our best for Him (1 Corinthians 9:25), and to show love to our opponents (Matthew 5:44). Truly, He's the greatest Coach with the best team ever! If you haven't joined Christ's team, tryouts are anytime. And, don't worry, you won't be cut. He accepts any and all who call on His name. If you are already on Christ's team, make sure you are practicing as hard as you can—reading your Bible, praying and finding others to join His squad. And, remember, if you follow His instructions, you will be blessed. He wants us all to be MVPs.

Go

1. Have you ever been cut from a sports team? How did that feel?
2. What does it feel like to be a part of a winning team?
3. What keeps you from going all-out for your coach in practice?
4. What keeps you from going all-out for Christ? Do you need to make any adjustments in order to follow Him with all your heart?

Workout

Matthew 5:44 Mark 16:15 1 Corinthians 9:25 2 Timothy 2:15

Bible Reference:

2 Timothy 2



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8701 Leeds Road | Kansas City, MO 64129 | 800.289.0909
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