

## **Rise Up Today**

### **Ready:**

“Then he said to the crowd, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me.’” –Luke 9:23

### **Set**

Just before finishing at my university, I was asked to play with a Christian basketball team called Spirit Express against an all-star team of the best players from universities across Missouri. My teammates were unheralded and so few in number that we all fit in a van that arrived just in time for tipoff. The other team was the opposite—well known and a full roster with a few guys headed to the NBA. My teammates, who had never played together before, brought no agenda but Christ and team. Little David beat mighty Goliath that night.

Teamwork was key, but it started with each of us humbly forfeiting our own selfish agendas, putting to death our personal dreams, and following our coach and his game plan for the team. Similarly, Jesus, our Master Coach, recruits us to His team with a challenge: If you want to be on My team, give up your selfishness, put to death your rights and self, and follow me

Just as I can bring my own selfish agenda to a sports team, it is easy to approach Christ for what I can get. It is the opposite of His invitation to self-denial. Your lack of self-focus frees you of the demands to get your own way and makes you the teammate that others dream of playing with. Imagine a team filled with people like that!

Let the competition begin. Let the glory be God's.

### **Go**

1. How can playing sports lead to selfishness?
2. What are some ways that Christ is calling you to turn from selfish ways?
3. What is holding you back from following Christ whole-heartedly?

### **Workout**

Matthew 9:9

Luke 5:11

Philippians 2:3-4

**Overtime**

*Mark 10:23-31*

*Jesus, give me grace to turn from selfishness to follow You. Amen.*

**Bible Reference:**

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