

## **Souled Out**

### **Ready:**

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship."

-Romans 12:1(NIV)

### **Set**

In the world of Oklahoma Sooner athletics, Laura Tomes became a household name this past volleyball season. That was easy to understand considering the fact that, as the middle blocker, she led the OU to its best seasons in nine years, was a critical player in the school's first defeat of the University of Texas Longhorns, and helped her team to the Sweet 16 for only the second time in school history. Tomes played with a lot of heart on the court and easily found herself playing the role of the fan favorite.

Tomes did not always enjoy the luxuries of glory, though. In the four short years that she played for the Sooners, Tomes endured three knee surgeries and finished her senior season with two bulging discs in her back. Through all of the physical ailments, Tomes continued to play with passion and heart on the volleyball court.

Much like Tomes, the Apostle Paul experienced many physical setbacks. In 2 Corinthians 11:23-25, Paul talks of himself by saying ". . . I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day on the open sea. . ." Obviously, Paul suffered greatly to advance the Gospel of Christ.

So, why would Tomes and Paul continually suffer for their respective causes? The two were "souled-out" to a greater cause. Romans 12:1 says to ". . .offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship." Paul understood the sacrifice that needed to be met to please the Lord. Are you willing to do the same?

### **Go**

1. To what cause are you offering yourself? Is it worthy of your commitment?
2. What sacrifices are you making for the Lord?
3. Do you pray for boldness to offer you body as a "living sacrifice"?

### **Workout**

Romans 8:18-39

### **Bible Reference:**

2 Corinthians 11



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