

## **Taking On Defeat**

### **Ready:**

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

-Hebrews 12:2

### **Set**

Carolina Panthers quarterback Jake Delhomme didn't rush into the locker rooms after losing Super Bowl XXXVIII by three points to the New England Patriots. Quite the contrary. He stood on the sidelines and forced himself to watch the Patriots in jubilee. Delhomme commented afterwards, "I guess I just wanted it to hurt as much as possible. I wanted to watch the celebration so that it could hurt. So I could remember it for motivation."

We've all experienced defeat in sports. Certainly, we'll sometimes feel defeat in life — hurtful relationships, loss, confusion, bad choices and mistakes, regrets, lost opportunities, rejection, etc. Undoubtedly, we'll all experience these types of challenges sooner or later. How do we endure such times in life? How do we keep the faith? These are real questions in such times.

In the verse above, the writer of Hebrews gives us at least one helpful plan in times where we need endurance. That's to focus our eyes on Jesus. He suffered the painful, suffocating death of the cross — the symbol of utter shame in His day. Sometimes this can be hard when we get a glimpse of its reality, as it should. The cross of Christ IS hard ... and it looks so much like defeat! Many know Mel Gibson's upcoming movie "The Passion of the Christ" will depict this 'hardness' of the crucifixion. The point is that remembering Christ's agony on the cross can sometimes push us forward. We learn in our hearts that He's suffered along with us (and far beyond us) and can sustain us in our times of great need. The good news is that when we identify ourselves with Him in His death, we'll also identify with His resurrection. The cross and His death actually became the Hope of the world in the resurrection.

In life's beatings, try not to retreat to the locker room. Like Delhomme, stand on the sidelines of the Christ and look on to our Savior who's been in our shoes and persevered through even the greatest lashings. Even the sight of such a deal can sometimes propel us with endurance into tomorrow.

### **Go**

1. What pain in your life are you turning your eyes from today?
2. How might facing the hurt help you?

### **Workout**

Hebrews 12:3

Romans 8:18-21

### **Bible Reference:**

Hebrews 12



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