

Trusting the No-Look Pass

Ready:

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

-Romans 8:38-39

Set

Mike is one of my best friends. What you need to know about Mike is that he is a natural-born athlete. I, on the other hand, am a natural-born glutton for punishment. When Mike and I were in college and graduate school, we spent a lot of time working at our neighborhood pool during the summers. When there was a break in the action, we'd play some basketball on one of the hoops that was set up adjacent to the pool's tennis courts. I never beat him head-to-head. Let's just say that he was the Kevin McHale of our neighborhood, while I played basketball like the swimmer I was. Sometimes, though, one of Mike's best friends from college, Jeff, would stop by for a visit. Perhaps as a way of paying me back for my willingness to continue my futile participation in our one-on-one games, Mike would let me play on the same side with him and Jeff when we were able to get a three-on-three game going. Notwithstanding my participation, we were unstoppable. No matter the opponent or what defense they threw at us, Mike and Jeff had an unnatural ability to find each other on the court and make the winning play. All I needed to do was to set the occasional pick and pull down the occasional rebound. They did the rest. No-look passes. Give-and-go's. You name it, they executed it, often without so much as exchanging a look or a word. They had the ultimate in-game level of trust in one another.

When hard times or issues come along in our lives, whether at home, school, work, church or the athletic field, it can be difficult to trust God's plan for us. When it comes to trusting God, I have come to realize that it is a lot like those no-look passes that Mike and Jeff used to dish out on the playground. In other words, it is not so much that there is a method or process for trust that I need to learn or to absorb, so much as I simply need to accept as a fact that God is not going to let me down when it comes to the truly important things in my life. Paul gets at this in the key passage noted above. He reminds us that nothing can separate us from God's love for us.

Go

1. What makes it hard for you to trust that Jesus will help you to win the battles at hand? Does knowing that nothing can stand against Jesus make it easier for you to trust His plan for your life?
2. Re-read Philippians 4:11-13 and consider Paul's statement of how important trust and contentment were to him when dealing with difficult times in his life and ministry. Can you deal with hard issues more effectively by focusing on the strength that Jesus gives us to serve Him?

Workout

James 1:5-8 (Believe and do not doubt.)

2 Kings 6:8-23 (Like Elisha, trapping blinded Arameans, trust in God when under attack.)

Mark 9:14-25 (If you have doubts, pray that God will help with your "unbelief.")

Overtime

"Lord, we can't thank You enough for Your constant protection in our lives and faithful guidance in our roles as spiritual leaders on our teams, in our schools and in our homes. With the help of the Holy Spirit, You have placed

inside each of us, help us to finish the work You have laid out for each of us. We pray, Lord, that You would help us with our unbelief and that we would TRUST the paths that You desire for our lives. In the name of Christ, Amen.”

Bible Reference:

James 1



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