

Praising God Through Pain

Ready:

"You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts." -2 Corinthians 3:3 (NIV)

Set

As I approached the third hurdle, I knew that I was a little too far away to take it with my right leg. So in a split second, I decided to alternate and go over with my left foot leading. I had done this a thousand times in my career, but this time when I landed I felt my knee shift out of the socket. I had hyperextended my knee, and I knew my running days were over.

Surrounded by my teammates, I was faced with a choice. My team knew me as the person who had led them in Bible studies and professed Christ, and now they waited expectantly to see what was going to proceed out of my mouth. In a split second their anxious eyes received the answer when I screamed, "Hallelujah!" I yelled it from the sheer pain I was feeling.

The apostle Paul writes that as believers, we must be a living testimony—an open book for the world to see the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. Sometimes this is painful. Sure, it could be physically painful, like the pain that I was feeling. Harder still, it could be psychologically painful, like the pain we feel when we are isolated from our peers because of our beliefs in Christ Jesus. Paul further writes that while he has gained much in the world, he counts it loss to him, so he might win Christ (see Philippians 3:8).

Although I would later need to have my left leg amputated from the accident, there was a greater outcome than I could have anticipated: Two people gave their lives to Christ as a result of seeing the way that I reacted to the situation. As Paul said, it was not I but Christ who lives inside who won the victory that day (see Galatians 2:20).

Go

1. Are you a living testimony for the world to see the glorious gospel of Christ? Why or why not?
2. How can you become more available to model Christ in your pain today, inside and outside of competition?
3. Are you able to say that having Christ in your life is worth the loss of everything else?

Workout

2 Chronicles 12:9-10; John 15:2; Philippians 3:8; Hebrews 10:35

Overtime

Father, help me to grow in You so that my life—each action that I perform and word that I speak—will bring You glory and honor. Amen.

Bible Reference:

Hebrews 10



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