

## **I Love This Game**

### **Ready:**

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men."  
-Colossians 3:23

### **Set**

One of the biggest conflicts I've had with teams that I've coached is how much they've said they loved the game. I would watch a game with them, and they'd tell me over and over how much they loved to play and how great the game is to them. I would immediately ask them, "When is the last time you were in the gym working on it?" I would get the same response, "I love to play, not practice."

I would then tell them about Darrell Smith. Darrell was a gifted player who was making the most of his ability at a school in Indiana, but his grades fell short and he lost his scholarship. He left the school, but had one more year to play. Darrell got one more shot at a school in Oklahoma where I was coaching at the time. Darrell was a GOOD player, but his work ethic made him a GREAT player. When he was not in class, he was in the gym or weight room working on his game. Not only did he condition with his team, but he also would come early in the morning to work out with my team in preseason conditioning. My team thought he was crazy until the season started. Darrell not only starred on his team, but also led the nation in scoring for all colleges that year.

When you asked Darrell why he worked so hard, he would tell you that God gave him a gift and another chance to play for Him! He gave it his all, all the time, and it paid off in the end. He was a first team All-American and Player of the Year in our conference. Darrell truly loved the game, and not just with his words.

Your walk with Christ needs to be done with all your heart unto the Lord, not for others around you. Our challenge is to grow in Christ daily by spending time in His word and walking in His ways. God desires our total commitment to Him. He has no use for our spiritual lip service. Whether it is your game or your faith, give it your all, all the time.

### **Go**

1. Can people SEE how much you love to play your sport, or do they just HEAR about it?
2. How can you improve you love for the Lord?
3. Today, how can you start to give it your all on the floor and in your walk?

### **Workout**

1 Corinthians 15:9-10  
James 2:17-18

### **Bible Reference:**

James 2



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