

## **Starting Five**

n/a

### **Ready:**

"Do not lack diligence; be fervent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer." — Romans 12:11–12

### **Set**

Many times we think about the starting lineup for an athletic team and how we as athletes work to make the cut. What about God's starting five—not five people, but five direct commands from His Word.

The verses above are commands from God. He starts the lineup by telling us to never be lacking in diligence. Diligence is a persistent and hardworking effort in doing something. As we continue on through the verse, we find the second command in the lineup is to serve the Lord. This is exceedingly important in the Christian walk. Verse twelve is especially direct. It sets three tasks we are to complete to round out the team. We are to rejoice in hope, be patient in affliction, and be persistent in prayer. These three instructions are power-packed. They tell us to have hope, yet warn that we will face affliction. And through all these circumstances, which encompass much of our lives, we are to be faithful in prayer.

As athletes, we often know the diligence needed to have a great game, yet also know the pain of injury. If we adopt these verses as the "starting five" in our lives, they will sustain us against affliction. God challenges us to serve the Lord with enthusiasm, be joyful in hope, be patient in times of trouble, and above all be faithful to communicate all of our needs to Him.

### **Go**

1. What affliction have you faced that brought you to the point of believing in God's faithfulness?
2. How is your joy in serving Christ expressed when you are involved in athletics?
3. Look up Ephesians 1:18–19 and Jeremiah 29:11. What other benefits are there for those who believe in the Lord?
4. As a coach, which is the most difficult of these instructions to carry out?

### **Workout**

Extra Reading: Acts 20:18–21; Hebrews 10:36

### **Overtime**

Lord, help me realize that because of Your sacrifice for me, I can be joyful, no matter what

trials I face. Thank You for allowing me to serve You. Thank You for the hope that can only be found through a patient, hopeful, and growing relationship with You. Amen.

**Bible Reference:**

Hebrews 10



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