

Cheerleaders or Critics

n/a

Ready:

Therefore since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us . . . consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, so that you won't grow weary and lose heart. — Hebrews 12:1, 3

Set

A few years ago I was privileged to participate in the memorial service for a faithful servant, a dear friend and a former head football coach. More than two thousand of this man's family, friends, colleagues, and student athletes attended the service. As I stepped into the pulpit of the church, I thought, Look at all these people. The grandstands are packed for him today. Everyone here is a cheerleader! What a great send-off for a coach, and a great testimony to a life well lived.

As we experience the world of athletics, we'll find people cheering or booing, depending on the circumstances of the moment. When we step into the spiritual realm, we read about that heavenly stadium, filled with that "great cloud of witnesses," those great saints and heroes of the faith, encouraging and cheering us as God's earthly team to victory. Imagine them applauding, yelling for us to finish the course, to fight the fight, to run the race, to keep the faith! They are shouting for us to run with perseverance, to fix our eyes on Jesus, and to remember that as bad as we may think our circumstances are, Jesus' circumstances for our sake were far worse. They exhort and cheer us on, so that we won't forget how Jesus endured the cross, its shame, and the hostility of mankind. They call out to us so that we won't grow weary and lose heart!

As we go through our days today, we might experience both critics and cheerleaders. But we can't let them distract us from our Savior and that heavenly host of fans, who've "got our backs" no matter what the circumstances dictate!

Go

1. In your daily life, who are your critics? Your cheerleaders?
2. How do you react to their responses?
3. What could you do today to hear the heavenly cheerleader's shouts over the jeers of earthly critics?

Workout

Extra Reading: Psalm 20:7–8; Isaiah 43:2–3; Hebrews 12:1–3

Overtime

Great God and Father, thank You that I am never alone in this race. Help me to cheer others on as together we fix our eyes on Jesus! Amen.

Bible Reference:

Hebrews 12



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