

## **Looking Forward**

n/a

### **Ready:**

Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself just as He is pure. — 1 John 3:2–3

### **Set**

Teresa was one of those athletes who was all spirit, gifted with more determination than natural talent. But her Christian faith and love for soccer had a powerful effect on my other public high school players. If I needed a surge of enthusiasm to flow through my team, I looked to Teresa.

On a difficult practice one day, Teresa struggled to finish a long distance run. As I jogged to the end of the line to encourage her, she glanced upward and shouted, "Take me now, Lord Jesus, take me now so I don't have to finish!" We both laughed so hard we were through running in no time!

Though funny at the time, I've often thought of her plea. Teresa instinctively knew there was something far better in life than earthly struggles or physical pain. She knew she was one of God's children and that something greater than this life awaited her: the hope of heaven.

When the Apostle John wrote of such hope, he had firsthand experience. An eyewitness of the death of our Lord Jesus on the cross, John must have been crushed by the pain of such an event. But he witnessed the resurrected Lord, who appeared to several hundred witnesses afterward and sat down at the Father's throne in heaven. John's hope sustained him during great days of persecution; it purified him and empowered him to live expectantly of Christ's return.

For coaches who want their players to experience God's love, there's no greater gift we can give them than the hope of eternal life, the expectation that we will see Jesus as He is! Teresa reminded me of that hope at soccer practice, and her words still challenge me to keep looking forward to the day!

### **Go**

1. What do you imagine heaven to be like?
2. How can hope sustain you today?
3. What does it mean to be God's child now?

### **Workout**

Extra Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:3–8, 17–18; Revelation 1:4–7

## Overtime

Risen Lord, May the gift of eternal life renew our love for You today! Amen.



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