

## The Name of the Game Is Love

### **Ready:**

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. ‘The second is: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other command greater than these.’” - Mark 12:30-31

### **Set**

As athletes and coaches, we spend a lot of time at practice. As an endurance athlete, when I’d train for marathons, I’d spend a minimum of two hours a day training for it. While that may seem like a lot, I remember back to my college days when we’d spend up to six hours a day training for football.

As part of a team, though, I wasn’t alone for all those hours. I was on the field, in the meeting room, in the weight room and in school with nearly 100 other guys. Being part of a team was such an encouragement. The long hours weren’t as long when I was with brothers and friends who were going through the same challenges. Making it through the physical training, though, wasn’t always the most challenging aspect of being part of a team. Sometimes it was more about the relationships and how to love my teammates. And it always seemed easier to love them when I got a good return—a win—out of my investment.

When it comes to God’s point of view, though, that’s very much contrary to how He sees things. If we read the verses from Mark above and substitute in “teammate” for “neighbor” it might sound something like, “The second is: Love your teammate as yourself.” Notice that God does not say, “When you feel like it, love your God and your teammates. When you have time, love your God and your teammates.”

And coaches, it goes the same for you with your staff and players. I’ve never read a verse where Jesus says, “Love your God and your teammates at all times except when practicing and playing sports and ONLY if you are winning.” That verse isn’t in my Bible. In fact, I’m fairly certain it’s not in yours, either.

As competitors, I pray that today we would be mindful of our calling to love those around us, no matter what challenges we face, both on the field and off.

### **Go**

1. How do you like to be treated by your teammates?
2. Are you treating your teammates like you want to be treated?
3. Imagine Jesus attending one of your athletic practices. How would He react to the way you interact with your teammates? Coaches, how would He react to the way you interact

with your staff and players?

## **Workout**

Leviticus 19:18 Mark 12:30-33 John 13:34-35

## **Overtime**

“Jesus, today I pray that I may see with Your eyes. Help me to recognize the opportunities You bring me to show others how much You love them. Lord, help me to be love where there is no love. Help me to love my teammates as You love me.”

## **Bible Reference:**

John 13



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