

A Father's Influence

Ready:

“Listen, my son, to your father’s instruction...” - Proverbs 1:8a

Set

Have you ever been dumbfounded after the clock ran out on a crucial game and said, “What the heck just happened? Nothing went right”? Your team dropped passes, missed lay-ups, and messed up simple plays. It’s helpful to know in these times that regardless of the outcome in sports, God still has an ultimate plan for our lives.

In the summer of 2014 I was blessed to lead the first overnight FCA Sports Camp in Virginia. After months of planning everything was ready. There were 254 middle and high school campers, 30 college athlete Huddle Leaders, 40 college and high school coaches, and a number of FCA Staff preparing to arrive at the University of Richmond—the site of the camp—and I was in charge...or so I thought. As the clock ran down on our time before the camp, God reminded me that He was, in fact, the One in control.

As I pulled into the camp to welcome the core staff, I received a call that my dad’s health was failing fast due to pneumonia and other complications. I left the camp and drove to the hospital, and while alone with my dad that night I typed dozens of memories of him into my iPhone. Eventually I said good-bye to him for the last time, and as I walked outside, the embrace of those memories turned into anger. “Why God? Why this week of all weeks?! I have a camp to run! My staff is counting on me! I put all this work in, and now I won’t be able to run the camp!”

Just then, in a clear whisper I heard the Creator of the Universe—the One who knows us by name and when we will take our last breath—say, “Michael, dozens of campers are going to encounter Me for the first time this week, and your dad will meet Me face to face. Isn’t that enough?”

That was all I heard: a sweet, loving voice, and reminder from the Father telling his child that He was in control and that everything would be OK.

As tears filled my eyes, God spoke to me and confirmed that during what could be a chaotic time, He would help me to be there for my family and direct the camp staff to serve and love the campers. I was blessed to be with my family at Dad’s bedside and to have my extended FCA family pray for and reach out to me during the week of camp.

Praise God that my dad knew Christ before he took his last breath, and praise God that more than 100 campers made either first-time commitments or rededications to Christ that week.

And as I look back now, I'm reminded that nothing is ever beyond God's control or His reach. He can take whatever comes our way and bring it together with seamless perfection according to His plan, even if we can't possibly see how.

Today, be reminded that whatever your situation, God is bigger. Listen for His assurance that He loves you and that He will guide you through.

Go

1. Think of a situation you thought was out of your control that God worked out for good. How can that encourage you to trust God?
2. Make a list of the ways your Heavenly Father has blessed you.
3. What is He saying to you today, and how will you respond?

Workout

- Job 38:1-3
- Proverbs 20:24
- Luke 23:39-43
- Romans 15:5-6
- 2 Thessalonians 3:16

Overtime Dear Father, thank You for Your influence in our lives. Thank You for taking us by the hand, leading and directing us on the path You want us to walk. As believers and Your family, may we draw closer together and closer to You every day. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Bible Reference:

Proverbs 1:8
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