

## The Roller Coaster of Life

### Ready:

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.” – James 1:2-3 (NIV)*

### Set

Growing up, I was always a “sports guy.” I enjoyed playing just like a lot of other kids, but—without bragging too much—my twin brother and I happened to find success no matter what sport we tried. In fact, we used to have to bring our birth certificates to T-ball games to prove we were actually the correct age, despite hitting home runs every at-bat.

My successful young sports career continued into middle school and high school, and everything just seemed—well, great. Life off the field was always stable. I had parents who loved me. I was always healthy, and eventually many schools were offering me the opportunity to fulfill my dream of playing college football.

Then real life hit.

My dad was diagnosed with cancer. I won the starting quarterback position as a freshman at Oklahoma, but then lost it. I battled a knee injury. I got my starting spot back but then dislocated my shoulder. I was MVP of the 2014 Sugar Bowl. Preseason Heisman Trophy candidate. Disappointing season. Severe neck injury. Parents got divorced. Lost my starting spot again—this time for good. Transfer to Texas A&M. Win the starting job.

If that sounds like a bit of a roller coaster ride, it absolutely has been.

But I believe all of us are on the roller coaster of life. One day everything seems great, but the next day the world will let you down and smash your face into the dirt. However, just as it says in James 1 (NIV), we are to, **“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, when you face these trials of many kinds.”**

Using the past few years of my life as an example, I want to encourage you to be strong and courageous through the hard times, allowing them to be opportunities to lean in closer to God and give your life completely to Him. When the good times come around, be thankful and praise God for the successes.

Don't lose heart as you ride the roller coaster of life. Trust that God is your escort through it all, drawing you closer to His heart and love.

### Go

- How has your life resembled a roller coaster ride with its high and low points?
- In what ways have you seen or felt God meet you in both the highs and lows of life?
- Who is someone you could share this message with?

### **Workout**

- John 16:33
- Romans 5:3
- 1 Timothy 6:11

### **Overtime**

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of life You've blessed me with. From the highest of highs to the lowest of lows, I know You are consistently by my side as I ride the roller coaster of life. Help me understand that every moment in life—good and bad—is meant to draw me closer to You and allow me to experience Your grace, mercy and love even fuller in my life. Thank You for that truth and for loving me. Amen.

### **Bible Reference:**

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