

## **Who You Are Without Sports**

### **Ready:**

“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” 1 Timothy 4:8

### **Set**

God has always asked me this question: “Who are you without sports?” As both an athlete and a coach, I’ve asked this to my teammates and players as well. I ask them, “Is your identity found in your sport?”

Throughout my whole life, I was known as the athlete. My worth was found in my accomplishments on Friday nights, game night. If I played well, I was the man--the greatest of all time! But if I played bad, I was a nothing--a failure. All of my worth was found in how well I performed as an athlete.

It wasn’t until later in my life and athletic career (circa 2008) that God revealed that sports had become my idol. The Bible defines an idol as anything we put in front of God. I felt an immediate conviction because I realized how true this was. It was clear as day. Every morning, I started off watching Sports Center on ESPN. Then, I’d hit the gym after work, and when I wasn’t doing any of those things, I was coaching and playing league and club. I would pray daily, but God was definitely not first in my life.

So, I started to change my daily schedule. I started journaling my praises (things I was thankful for) and recording my prayers every morning. I also began reading my Bible daily, studying what God had to say about me. I discovered then how much He loves me! See, I had always thought God wanted to take sports from me, and that I was sinning if I loved the game too much. But that was the lie the enemy was telling me. The truth was that God wanted me to use my sport and gifts to glorify Him!

God gave you gifts and the desire to be an athlete. I pray and minister to my teammates and athletes daily; I let God use me for His good work in this way, and you can too! Here’s the truth about our identities: I am a child of the most high God; you are a child of the most high God. We have the power, through Him, to save others. How amazing is that?!

As you use this time of reflection, remember that your identity comes from Him, the Creator. Ask God to reveal how you can make the most of your skills and abilities for His good work.

### **Go**

1. Who are you without sports?
2. What is another gift or interest you have that is not sports-related?

3. How can you use your athletic ability to honor God or share the Gospel?

### **Workout**

1 Timothy 4:6-16; Genesis 1:27

### **Overtime**

“Heavenly Father, thank You for my abilities to play sports! Help me to use my gifts to share the good news about You and Your Son, Jesus. Thank you for loving me just because! Today, I pray that I know you better. I love You, Lord. Amen.”

### **Bible Reference:**

1 Timothy 4:8

1 Timothy 4:6-16

Genesis 1:27



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