

Bucket of Rocks

Ready:

“Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will support you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.” Psalm 55:22

Set

Are you reaching your full potential as a player, teammate, coach, or do you tend to carry unnecessary burdens that hinder your growth? Are you living the best possible version of your life? Not society’s counterfeit version where selfish aspirations reign supreme and the only important factors are your personal feelings and happiness, rather one that pursues authentic Godliness at every turn. If not, maybe you can learn a lesson from Shrek--not the Mike Meyers cartoon ogre, but the sheep.

Shrek was a runaway sheep. He managed to elude the “captivity” of his loving shepherd and hid in a cave for nearly 4-years. When Shrek was finally rediscovered, he was barely recognizable. When he was finally shorn, his fleece weighed nearly 60 pounds--six times the weight of a normal fleece. Separated both physically and emotionally from his shepherd, Shrek was forced to carry so much unnecessary weight and burden.

I recently attended a 50th birthday celebration and was inspired as I listened to a father and son recount the spartan race that they competed in together. One of the final challenges they faced was carrying a large bucket of rocks up a substantial hill (a small mountain in their version) and then back down again. Although their version was related much more to the teamwork the father and son employed to endure this test of strength and endurance, it also made me think of how often I carry heavy burdens much longer than needed. It made me think of how often my players have struggled with burdens much longer than needed—sometimes, throughout an entire season.

How closely does this correspond to our own mountaintop experience? When we arrive at the foot of the cross-carrying all our heavy burdens, do we choose to leave our “bucket of rocks” there, or do we rise and carry the heavy weight back down the mountain and into our daily life. Maybe your journey is more of a hybrid, where you emptied your rocks but decided to hold onto the bucket for safekeeping. Then while descending the trek, you notice several shiny rocks you like and add them to your bucket. This happens multiple times, and before you realize it, your bucket is full and your burden is heavy.

When it comes to mountains, it is often said that the best view comes after the hardest climb. It is also widely recognized that the easiest, yet scariest part is the descent. We often fall prey to the assumption that you have been made stronger by withstanding the pressure, so continuing to shoulder each burden seems easier than letting them go. Nothing could be

farther from the truth. God's path down each mountain is one already trekked. Christ has already forged the best path down and is eager to show you the way. He'll even carry you if necessary.

Next time you are faced with unnecessary burdens or Satan's fiery temptations, make that beautiful climb and use the Stop Drop and Roll method to help but out the fire:

- Stop: Make the time to stop at the foot of the cross to pray.
- Drop: Drop all of your burdens at the foot of the cross.
- Roll: Keep things moving in your daily life trusting that Christ has already accepted your burden.

Go

1. What burdens did you once abandon to God only to pick back up?
2. What struggles do your players or teammates face today that you could help ease?

Workout

Psalm 72:3; Isaiah 41:13; Matthew 11:28-30

Overtime

"Heavenly Father, thank You for the desire to meet You on the mountaintop. Forgive me when I step off the mountain and descend back into a lifestyle that doesn't honor You. Surround me with Your Holy Spirit, friends, and teammates that will challenge me to stay the course and pursue You above all else."

Bible Reference:

Psalms 55:22

Psalms 72:3

Isaiah 41:13

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