

## **Tough but Transformational**

### **Ready:**

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” -- Romans 8:28-29

### **Set**

Embracing encouragement after losing is difficult. Very difficult. As an athlete and coach, whenever I walk off the field after a disappointing loss, an awkward moment always arises—I need to thank my family for coming to the game, but I don’t want to chit-chat. Then comes the other awkward moment—what will they say? On cue, they always offer positive comments, forever revealing the bright spots in even the worst loss. In these moments saturated by my negative attitude, I don’t want to receive affirmations of encouragement and truth; deep down, though, I know that my struggling heart craves it.

When life tackles me and I struggle with discouragement, close friends rush in to remind me that God works all things together for my good and His glory (see Romans 8:28). True? Yes. Easy to embrace in the moment? Not always. When we can’t foresee good outcomes resulting from struggles, we must battle to believe that God is still working.

In Romans 8:29, we are reminded that God’s purpose for our lives is to become more like His Son, Jesus Christ. Though difficulties tempt us to get sucked into contempt, self-pity, and sulking, we can hold onto the truth that God is working everything together for our good. How? By transforming us to look more like Jesus. In the present moment, it may not be what you want to hear. But when you get through it, you’ll see that it was exactly what you needed. Your struggling heart craves it.

### **Go**

- How do you receive encouragement after a disappointing loss?
- In difficult circumstances, how easy is it for you to believe that God is working in your life? Why or why not?
- Is there someone that you need to encourage today?

### **Workout**

Genesis 50:20; 2 Corinthians 3:16-18

### **Overtime**

“Father, help me trust You in difficult times. Though I may not always see how You’re working, may I rest knowing that You are transforming me to look more like Jesus. I trust You. Amen.”

**Bible Reference:**

Romans 8:28-29

Genesis 50:20

2 Corinthians 3:16-18



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