

You Are Bold and Beautiful!

Ready:

"Oh, don't worry; we wouldn't dare say that we are as wonderful as these other men who tell you how important they are! But they are only comparing themselves with each other, using themselves as the standard of measurement. How ignorant!" -- 2 Corinthians 10:12

Set

I'm faster than she is...She's a better defender than me...I'm the best because I qualified for regionals and none of my teammates did...If I can just beat the record that she set when she played here I'll be considered the best of all time...

How many times a day do you have thoughts like these? As an athlete, it probably happens pretty often. After all, sports are filled with comparisons. They're essentially what the industry is built on outside of the win/loss column. Everyone—including us—wants to know who is the best and how they stack up to the competition. And while this can be useful in making a game plan, it's a horrible measure of anything beyond that...especially when it comes to defining our worth.

When it comes to comparing ourselves with others, there's a very fine line between an appropriate and necessary comparison and a dangerous, prideful one. As athletes, we have to know how we match up against our opposition, otherwise we won't have a game plan. Our coach has to tell us who is guarding who based on how we compare to the other team, and that's fine! However, when we let those factual comparisons start to mess with our worth, that's when we get into trouble.

It's terribly hard not to think you're better than another girl because you can run faster or serve with better accuracy. It's tough not to be filled with pride when we earn first-team all-conference honors and our rival doesn't. Or, on the flip side, it's hard not to think we're worthless when we don't match up against those who are more skilled. We feel less...inferior—and that sentiment doesn't stop on the court. We feel less as a woman.

You see? This is why comparison is dangerous! There's no way our athletic performance should even begin to touch our worth and value! Where in God's Truth does it say that she who runs fastest is His most prized? Nowhere! The Bible says that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; that there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free; that *all* of us are made in God's image; and that Jesus died for *all*.

In God's eyes, there is no one better or worse than the other. He loves us all the same: totally and completely.

Comparison can be a problem in that it takes us away from letting Jesus live through us. As His children, we need to let the world see Him through us, and we can't do that if we're so inflated that we're looking down our noses at others or we're so ashamed and disappointed that we don't engage with others or accept His life in us. Both scenarios will kill our witness and the reputation of Jesus if others know we follow Him.

Let comparison be what it is: a good way to scout out the competition on the field. That's it. Anything beyond that is unnecessary and unfulfilling. Let your identity and worth come from your status as God's daughter and live it out for the world to see.

Go

- Identify the specific areas of competition in which you battle negative comparisons.
- How do these comparisons affect your relationship with others? How do they affect your identity in Christ?
- How can you define the difference between appropriate and inappropriate comparison in sports?

Workout

Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:6

Overtime

"God, help me to remember that the only One I need to compare myself to is You. Help me to understand that I am enough and that I am Your child. I love You, Lord. Amen."

Bible Reference:

2 Corinthians 10:12

Romans 12:2

1 John 2:6



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