

## **Win or Lose**

### **Ready:**

“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” -- Romans 8:38-39

### **Set**

They played to the best of their ability, with all their strength and heart. The coaching was excellent, and the officials made all the right calls, but their team lost the championship game. The players were devastated and thought the coach and their parents would be visibly upset.

Much to their surprise, both the coach and parents responded in compassionate love, appreciating and valuing them for who they were, not their performance. Win or lose, they were accepted and loved.

This scenario could have played out very differently had the coach and parents expressed their disappointment and dissatisfaction, pointing to poor performance of the athletes' level of play or poor officiating. Consider how that would have made those athletes feel compared to scenario one.

Sometimes as coaches and athletes, we may fail to remember that God's love and acceptance of us is not based on our performance but on who we are, children of God! God's love for us is unconditional, unending, unwavering, unstoppable, infinite and personal. God is love!

The lyrics of the Casting Crowns song, "Who I Am," capture it beautifully: "Not because of who I am, but because of what You've done. Not because of what I've done, but because of who You are."

This is expressed as Agape love in the Bible and is defined as the highest, most pure form of love as described in 1 Corinthians 13. Agape love is sacrificial, which is what Jesus Christ displayed on the cross for us as he took our place, dying for our sin.

Next time you feel off your game, remember that God loves you no matter what!

### **Go**

- Have you experienced times as a competitor when you felt like you let God down?
- In what ways does God's Word remind you of His unconditional love for you?

### **Workout**

1 John 3:1; 1 John 4:7-19; Romans 5:5

## **Overtime**

“Heavenly Father, You have shown us what true love is. Before we knew You, You loved us and poured Your love out for us on the cross. Lord, we pray that we would reflect Your Agape love to the world around us. Amen.”



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