

Coming Up Short

Ready:

“And let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.” --James 1:4

Set

As a junior in high school, I had my sights set on earning a starting spot-on varsity for our basketball team. I worked harder than I ever had in the off-season and was eager to see what the season would hold. The season opener came, and I was less than prepared for what was ahead. With just under a minute left in the game, I was met with a season-ending ACL injury. Everything I was training and preparing for was stripped from me in a matter of seconds. I was crushed. Following the injury, I wrestled with questions about my purpose as an athlete and how God would use this disappointment.

One thing God doesn't promise is that this life *isn't* going to be met without disappointments. As a coach or athlete, the highs and lows of competing are inevitable. Injuries happen, big games end in losses and you may feel like you keep coming up short. So what does it look like to endure well? How can you be complete and lacking nothing? “Your *faith* produces endurance.” (James 1:3). Many times, it's the tough moments in life that refine us, strengthen us and make us more like Jesus.

Thirteen years later, I can still feel the sting of that loss (our team even won state that year!). In many ways, I feel like I came up short in my athletic career. But, one thing I'm still learning is that where I come up short, God goes the distance. When you anchor your identity and hope in the One that doesn't change, while everything else around you does, you can find the strength to keep going and keep enduring. Remember, Jesus is the only one that can complete you in ways that competing never will.

Go

- When was the last time you faced unexpected circumstances and had to grow in endurance? How did God carry you through?
- How do you handle disappointment? Do you feel yourself prone to “throwing in the towel” or do you lean into how God wants to use your story?
- How can you equip yourself to be ready when the hard times come? In what ways do you need to find your identity and wholeness in Christ?

Workout

Romans 5:3-5; Romans 12:12; Colossians 3:1-3

Overtime

“Lord, help us find our identity and our worth in you. Give us the strength and endurance we need to persevere when hard times come. Help us remember the purpose we have in you, no matter what comes our way. Thank you for the hope that will not disappoint us. Make our joy complete today and help us remember the influence we have simply by knowing you as our Savior. Amen.”



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8701 Leeds Road | Kansas City, MO 64129 | 800.289.0909
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