

## **The Name on the Front**

### **Ready:**

“Even now—this is the Lord’s declaration—turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Tear your hearts, not just your clothes, and return to the Lord your God. For he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love, and he relents from sending disaster.” – Joel 2:12-13

### **Set**

The name on the front of your jersey represents more than just a school. This name represents your community, mentors and best friends. Throughout the years you attend that school, you experience great triumphs and challenging losses.

The name on the front of your jersey is also embedded in your heart. You can tell who on your team plays for the name on the front and who plays for the name on the back of their jersey. When we play from the heart, we give 110 percent because we are playing for something bigger than ourselves. We are playing for all the past and future athletes, for our teammates and coach, and hopefully to give God all the glory no matter the score.

When I retired from my sport, I was gifted with my jersey. Tears welled in my eyes as I held it because I saw so much more than just a shirt when I looked at the jersey. What I did those four years was embedded in my heart.

Just as the name on my jersey ran much deeper than the surface, our faith should be embedded in our hearts. So much so that when we sin against God, our hearts must make it right. A player who plays with zero heart plays from the surface. If we have developed zero connection to God, our faith will never be more than surface level.

I love the scripture above because Joel says, “Tear your hearts, not just your clothes, and return to God.” In biblical times, when someone was upset or grieving, they would tear their clothes to show their grief. When we sin against God, it should impact us more profoundly than just tearing our clothes; we should be affected internally.

To tear our hearts is to feel convicted deep into our souls for sinning against our Creator. We should not be able to move forward until we have made things right. As we walk around representing Christ outwardly, I pray that our faith is embedded deep into our hearts.

### **Go**

- Are you deeply affected by your sin?
- What does it look like to have faith embedded in your heart?
- What are some signs of a shallow faith?

### **Workout**

2 Corinthians 5:20

2 Chronicles 7:14

### **Overtime**

“Lord God, we pray that our faith is deeply rooted in our hearts. When we sin against God, we pray, repent and seek You to cleanse us of our sins. We pray that as we walk in this world, we represent You outwardly and inwardly. Amen.”



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