

Wrestling with Worship

Ready:

?Whatever you do, do it enthusiastically, as something done for the Lord and not for men, knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord?you serve the Lord Christ.? - Colossians 3:23-24

Set:

This past winter I was having the best wrestling season of my life. I was physically and mentally strong, and I was able to fight hard. In my excitement about wrestling, I started watching tons of wrestling videos and quite dramatically stopped reading my Bible and doing devotions every morning before school. My life flipped completely from God being No. 1 to wrestling being the only thing I cared about.

Over a period of 2.5 months, I wrestled every day, not missing any practice. Then, God started trying to wake me up to see what I was doing. I got really sick, and then I permanently hurt my back. Still, I wouldn't listen to God; I kept right on ignoring Him.

Not long after that, I got kneed in my face during practice and completely broke my nose, but I was still being stubborn?focusing only on wrestling.

Later that season, I was beating a kid 11-1 after the first round. Then, right at the beginning of the second round, the kid threw me, and I broke my collar bone. That night as I lay in bed at the hospital, I felt like my whole life had just come to an end. I felt extremely lonely, and I was a wreck. Finally, at 3:00 a.m. the next morning, I read my first devotional in two months and prayed for the first time in a long time.

It wasn't until a couple months later that I realized just how my sickness and the injuries actually were good things in my life. In my misplaced focus, I had basically told God that wrestling was far more important than He was to me. After I realized what I had done, I thought, ?How could I do that to the One who created the world; the One who gives everlasting life; the only One who could and did die for my sins?? I had betrayed the most important person ever in my life: Jesus.

Thankfully, I learned from my mistake. I hope I never again tell God, ?Hey, You are cool, but this is way better," because nothing is better than God, and all worldly things will eventually fail me.

As athletes and coaches, I think we all get to the point of misplacing our priorities at some point and value our sport over God. So, today, I ask you to do a legitimate reality-check of where you are in your heart. Ask yourself, ?Whom do I worship?? If the answer isn't God first, it's time to make a change.

Go:

1. Answer the question at the end of the devotion. Do you worship God or do you worship your sport?
2. What about other things? Do you worship friends, family, status, reputation or material possessions above God?
3. What does life look like for you when God is your top priority?
4. What do you need to change in order to make (and keep) Him as the center of your life and your top priority?

Workout:

Deuteronomy 5:8-10

Matthew 6:33

Luke 4:8

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