

It's About Love

Ready:

Now this is His command: that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as He commanded us.

1 John 3:23

Set:

Rulon Gardner and Dremiel Byers were both vying for one spot on the 2004 U.S. Olympic wrestling team. Gardner was the 2000 Olympic gold medalist and 2001 World Champion and Byers the 2002 World Champion. Gardner won a pair of 2-1 overtime matches at the Olympic trials, and Byers laid down his pride and went to Athens to help prepare his friend for another gold medal run by serving as his training partner. Gardner came home with the bronze medal and a gold medal friend. Would he have done the same for Byers? No doubt about it!

God's Word is unmistakably clear in its command for us to love one another. But how is this biblical love fleshed out in the sports world? By putting the needs of others (the team) ahead of our own, as Dremiel Byers did for Rulon Gardner. I believe there are many ways that we can practically show love toward one another in sport. Sacrifice-bunting your teammate into scoring position, taking on two blockers so your teammate can make the tackle, moving over to take a charge when your teammate got beat, or staying after practice to help a teammate with a drill are all examples of loving others the way Jesus calls us to.

I encourage you to proactively find ways today to love one another with the love God has given us.

“Dear friends, if God loved us in this way, we also must love one another” (1 John 4:11).

Go:

1. How do you know when someone truly loves and cares about you?
2. When you show love to your teammates, how does that strengthen your team?
3. What is one thing you could do today that would show someone on your team that you love him or her?

Workout:

John 13:34-35

Romans 13:8

1 Peter 1:22

1 John 4:7

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