

**THE WORLD'S VIEW OF YOU AS AN ATHLETE...**

**GOD'S VIEW OF YOU AS HIS SON OR DAUGHTER...**

*I must gain my acceptance by proving that I deserve it since my value is always earned, never given.*

*In Christ, **I am accepted** by God as a result of His grace toward me--never a result of works--so I do not need to work harder or prove my worth to anyone else. (Ephesians 2:8,9)*

*I am constantly weighed down by the expectation to perform perfectly, a bondage made worse by the fact that my coach—who's responsibility is to push me toward perfection--determines whether I play or not.*

*In Christ, **I am secure** because God is in control of the circumstances of my life even when things feel out of control, even when I'm not getting the results I had hoped for in my sport. (Isaiah 40:28-31, 1 Peter 2:18-23)*

*I must compete and live by my own power and strength at all times.*

*In Christ, **I have the power of God** within me, and can turn to Him for courage, peace, patience, confidence, self-control and other strengths in any situation, whether in competition or in life. (Colossians 1:29)*

*I am aware of a sense of competitive loneliness sparked by various internal fears and insecurities - even though I may have teammates and coaches. Deep inside I'm afraid that the only one who truly cares about the real me is the one looking back at me in the mirror.*

*In Christ, **I am never alone** because His Spirit lives within me and is a constant presence with me no matter what I deserve or how I perform. (1 Corinthians 6:19; Hebrews 13:5)*

*I may never be free from and may always be marked by my sports mistakes (dropping the ball, missing the play, losing the game, etc.) throughout my career and beyond.*

*In Christ, **I am completely forgiven** for every moral mistake (sins committed against a holy God that have eternal consequences--self-centeredness, dishonesty, doing harm, stealing, judging, hating, pride, etc.) whether in the past, present or future, and I can live free from the burden of my own brokenness and imperfection, in both life and sports. (1 John 1:9, Matthew 5:21-28)*

*I am significant if I am a starter and praised for producing positive results.*

*In Christ, **I am significant** because God gives me purpose that transcends my performance, a purpose that flows out of playing a role in His unfolding story. (Ephesians 2:10; Ephesians 1:11)*

*I exist in a world where you only live once and what's happening at this moment - whether in sport or life - is the most important thing. I must compete with everyone around me in order to get what's mine today.*

*In Christ, **I have eternal life**, a life that begins now and extends forever into the future long after my earthly body dies, so I should invest in the spiritual lives of people instead of just the material pursuit of trophies. (1 John 5:13)*

*I am relentlessly pursuing my personal goals with the hope that they will provide lasting satisfaction. I chase a contentment that depends on gaining enough accolades to validate my success—though I know intuitively that no amount of worldly achievement will ever be enough.*

*In Christ, **I am satisfied in Him**, content to construct my identity from what He says is true about me, being freed to passionately pursue goals without expecting those goals to complete me. (Psalm 34:8-10, Philippians 4:11,12)*