



"For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."- 1 Timothy 4:8

COLD HANDS, FREEZING TOES. GREAT WINS AND FRUSTRATING LOSSES

Another roller-coaster of a week zipped by for the Hurricanes, and once again, we faced challenges beyond the game itself. Arctic weather conditions on Thursday left many checking their sanity: "Why am I out here?" "Why does it have to be THIS cold?" And several games left us scratching (maybe even shaking) our heads: "How could we lose so badly?" "How come the opposition was THAT good?" "Why did I have to be in the wrong place at the wrong time" (own goal). In the case of HSJVG, "Where is the opposition?" (Thursday night no-show).

So what are the "takeaways" from week 11? How can we make sense of the ups and downs, the highs and lows, the frozen fields, fingers and toes? Here's two general perspectives to consider:

1. Enjoy the successes because defeat may be just around the corner!
2. Don't wallow in self-pity at negative results or poor performances. Learn and grow from the experience and move on!

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But here's what I consider to be the most valuable lesson – one which helps us keep **STRONG. TO. THE. END.** That is...the "things" of this life are only temporary. Hot, cold; wins, losses; pain, pleasure. Each has its place and perhaps a season, but each is fleeting. Much like life itself, circumstances, whether good or bad, are here today, gone tomorrow. And without a Christian worldview, we may throw our hands up in despair and cry out like Solomon, "Meaningless! Meaningless...Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless!" (Ecclesiastes 1:2). It's at times like these when we need a vision - a goal to focus on which screams "Hang in there. Don't quit. Not now. Not ever." Why? Because the best is yet to come! This life, with all its peaks and valleys, is not the end of the story. It is only temporary. It is fleeting - like grass that withers and flowers that fall (1 Peter 1:24). So today, if you find yourself in a hard place; if this season of life seems unfair or cruel; if you're tempted to ask God, "Where are YOU in all of this?", press on and allow Scripture to fill your heart and mind, moving you to a whole new way of thinking in the process. Listen to Paul's encouragement to the believers in Corinth:

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

There is no secret formula for escaping the trials of life. They will come - for SURE they WILL come. But for the follower of Christ, he has the hope - the confident assurance - that there is a finish line in sight – a crossing over from temporary to permanent! Eternity with Jesus is secure, and the stings which accompany our earthly existence will be swallowed up in victory. So today, though it might be tough, rejoice regardless of your circumstances. God is in control. He will never leave you nor forsake you. With His power and His grace, you can be: **STRONG. TO. THE. END.**



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"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." - Philippians 4:13