



Bring It Home: The Bleachers | September 4, 2019

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

In sports, band, theatre... whatever it is that we are performing and there are people watching, there are always people in the bleachers. What would it look like if we thought about that in our spiritual lives? Read below to hear more.

Key Verses

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NIV)

"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ."

Discussion

Growing up, many of us were taught and encouraged by our parents to do our best. It didn't necessarily mean they wanted us to perform better than everyone else, they simply wanted us to put forth our best effort. As we get older, we start to notice that in most things, it's not just for ourselves that we are doing our best. Many times, there is an audience involved. There are people in the bleachers watching. And it's not only the perfect moments they see, but the mistakes and failures as well. While we often perform better when we know there are significant people in the crowd, it's worth asking who is watching when we mess up as well, and what we'd like them to think about us when the game or performance is over.

1. Was this true of your parents growing up? In what ways or areas did they encourage you to do your best (school, sports, etc.)?
2. As a child, did you perform better when you knew there was someone significant in the audience (a parent, varsity coach, scout, significant other, etc.)? Did you ever consider what people saw when you messed up?

When we think about this concept with our faith lives, it gets a little bigger. The reality is, it doesn't matter who you are or what you're doing; people are always watching. The same is true of your faith. Last week, we talked about the people in your life you may be coaching, and asking yourself if what you're doing is worth repeating. This week, we are looking at what other people are seeing. As Christians, we are called to live in a way that points people directly to Jesus. But we are also human, and because of that, we mess up from time to time. While we strive to do our best emulating the person of Jesus, we must also take ownership when we mess up and acknowledge that those things aren't of Jesus.

3. In what ways do you think you might be pointing people to Jesus by the way you live your life?
4. In what areas might you need to take ownership of the ways you fall short?

In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul says that despite all of his accolades, wisdom and training, the reason people should look to him as an example is not because he is great, it's because of Jesus. He tells readers to follow his example, as he has followed the example of Jesus. He does this multiple times in scripture. He works really hard to make sure that people understand why he does the things he does, and loves the way he does. It's all because of what he's learned about the life and practices of Jesus.

5. Do you think the people who "follow" you do so because of who you are, or because of what flows out of your relationship with Jesus?
6. How does this thinking transform the way we think about setting an example for others? Does it feel like more pressure or more grace?

What's Next?

Paul knows that he is not perfect. When he messes up, he takes ownership. But time and time again, what Paul tries so hard to do in scripture is point people to Jesus. He calls attention to the things that he does that are worth repeating, because they are of Jesus. In what ways are you pointing people to Jesus by the way that you live? In what areas do you need to take ownership of your failures and mistakes so that people know those things aren't of Jesus? The cool thing is that because of Jesus, it's ok when we mess up. There's always another chance, always another game, and always another opportunity.

This week, as you live out and engage your faith, continue to take ownership of your issues. Ask yourself who is watching – in both your successes as well as your failures. Help people see that the example that you want them to follow is not necessarily your own, it's instead a result of your relationship with Jesus.