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Husband to Julie. Dad to Megan and Zach. President of the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC).

Aug 7 · 3 min read

## Press On

*“I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

— Philippians 3:14 ESV

*“Every time I step on the field, I’m going to give my whole heart regardless of the score.”*

— Tim Tebow

At the start of the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, N.Y., the U.S. hockey team was little more than an afterthought.

The Soviets were seeded N<sup>o</sup>1, and deservedly so. They had won five gold medals and one bronze in the previous six Olympics.

The U.S. team was seeded seventh.

The Soviets unleashed 30 shots in the first two periods to the United States’ 10. One dramatic save after another by goaltender Jim Craig kept the U.S. team close.

Mark Johnson scored with one second remaining in the first period to tie it at 2 all, but the Soviets led 3–2 after two periods.

Team member John Harrington was quoted later as saying, “We’d played 40 minutes, they were just one ahead, but we were younger. *We wanted to take it to ‘em!*”



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The explosion of cheers was deafening, and most of the 10,000 fans began a chant of “USA! USA!” that did not end for the final 10 minutes.

At the final buzzer, against seemingly insurmountable odds, the U.S. team was victorious.



After the game, coach Herb Brooks pulled a yellow card from his pocket with the scrawled message on it that he had read to his team just before the game:

*“You were born to be a player. You were meant to be here.”*

What’s interesting is that the U.S. team was not playing to win the gold medal. That game was two days later (which they won). They were simply putting it all on the line against the best team they had ever played.

If you have ever seen the movie “Miracle”, you will remember the portrayal of young men with unyielding determination to excel... to be excellent, to be the best they could be.

Our faith-walk is no different. The Apostle Paul says, that like an Olympian runner, we are to strive in life to *“press (earnestly endeavor to acquire) on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in*

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***“Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might...” Ecclesiastes 9:10 NASB***

***“But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you...” 2 Corinthians 8:7 ESV***

***“And he (Jesus) said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and will all your soul and with all your mind.’” Matthew 22:37 ESV***

In 1 Corinthians Paul admonishes the church in Corinth to be ***“always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58 ESV)***. The word translated “abounding” (perisseuo) literally means *outstanding... doing over and above... excelling*.

No matter what, do your best. Be your best. Strive for excellence. Excel!! And always keep your heart and mind centered on Him.

*“...work hard and with gladness all the time, as though working for Christ, doing the will of God with all your hearts,” (Ephesians 6:7 LB).*

Prayer to IGNITE:

Lord, I work for you. Though I know I can never repay you for what you’ve done for me. Everything I am or will be is because of your grace in my life. Help me to do my work for your glory and honor you with my effort. It’s my reasonable service.

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