



But now, this is what the LORD says— he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.”

Isaiah 43:1

Redeeming Our Loss

“March Madness” describes the NCAA Basketball Championships. But this year, it also described Tonya’s* life. After a Final Four appearance the year before, her Arkansas team didn’t make it back to the NCAA’s, but did finish strong enough to get to the WNIT Finals on their home court.

Tonya’s last game as a senior would mark the completion of an illustrious career. Unfortunately, she couldn’t be there. The night before, her mom suffered a heart attack, and the afternoon of the game, she passed away. Two months earlier, her father had been diagnosed with cancer and later that year, he too passed.

Tonya had committed to play on our fall exhibition tour. In light of losing both her parents in seven month’s time, I certainly didn’t expect her to keep that commitment. But she still wanted to play.

The last game on our schedule was at Arkansas. Coincidence? Not a chance. The Lord loves to redeem our pasts and our lost opportunities! For Tonya, that game represented the last home game that she missed playing back in March. What a special night! She wanted her performance to honor not only her parents, but also the God that they taught her to love and follow.

And did she ever! Tonya played her best game on tour, scoring 14 points in the first half! What joy it brought us to watch her play on that familiar court, knowing that God used it to bring another level of healing to her heart. The bonus? We won the game, holding Arkansas to just 13 points in the second half!

*Not her real name.

Timeout

1. When has God redeemed something lost or broken in your past?
2. What did you learn through that experience?
3. How did His redemption help you to move on?

Excerpt from *Timeout: Moments With God for Winning in Life* (Campus Crusade for Christ, 2008) by AIA staff member and Certified Life Coach, Stephanie Zonars. **Order yours by December 20, 2008 for a 20% discount. Visit www.lifebeyondsport.com for more details.**