

The Rock

I based my whole life on a t-shirt which read: “Basketball is life and the rest is details.”

I had finally reached the pinnacle of my basketball career. All the sacrifices, hard work, and persistence had finally paid off. I was going to the 1996 Olympic Games. We were representing Canada, competing against the world’s best, chasing after a gold medal. This was it.

I thought basketball would take care of all my insecurities. I worshipped basketball. To worship something is “to ascribe great worth to it”. I was somebody because I played basketball. I was accepted. Basketball was my identity. It was something I could totally rely on - it would never let me down, it would always be there for me. I trusted basketball. It became my god.

Two weeks before the Olympic Games, I injured my knee. I had to sit on the sidelines and watch my team struggle throughout the Olympic Games filled with feelings of frustration and helplessness. My dream had become my nightmare.

After those games, other areas of my life came crashing down. I lost my coach. I was mad at the world. I had changed from being an encouraging, motivating, people person, to a cold person I didn’t like very much. In 1997, I decided to return to the National Team with hopes of redeeming myself from my terrible Olympic experience. The team needed to qualify for World Championships. It was another disappointing summer — we came up short and didn’t qualify.

The one good thing that happened that summer was when my team-mate told me about her experience with Athletes in Action. I decided to go on the USA fall tour with Athletes in Action. It was through AIA that I learned what it meant to have a relationship with Jesus. I realized that I had worshipped a created thing instead of the Creator of all things. I was building my life around things that could easily be taken away. I needed something permanent.

Jesus said, “A wise man builds his house on the rock that stands firm, while the foolish man builds his house on sand which comes crashing down.” In basketball, players sometimes refer to the ball as “the rock.” But this is not the rock that stands firm. I learned that sometimes God’s way of getting our attention is by showing us that we have misplaced priorities. He asked, “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, but forfeit his soul?” Sure, its nice to make an Olympic Team, but there is more to life.

I had built my life on “the rock,” only to find that it was sinking sand. Now I no longer build my life on basketball. Jesus Christ is THE Rock. He is the foundation that can not be shaken. Jesus Christ is my life.