

**Three Ways to be Better Teammates**

*From Rob Globke-Hockey Ministries, Intl*

**Romans 12:9-20**

There is a full stat sheet of things we can do to be better teammates at the rink. The passage in Romans 12 is like looking at a Sidney Crosby stat line. It’s on the brink of overwhelming. There is so much in there for us to think about as teammates on our hockey teams. So, I’m simply going to pull out three highlights. Just three for now, but you are welcome to pick out more if you would like. In fact, I urge you to find more.

**Be Patient**
*“be patient in tribulation…” - Romans 12:12
“but give thought to do what is honorable...” - Romans 12:17*

Hockey players are supposed to be a tough bunch. We are looked up to when we have a fierce spirit, one in which we don’t take anything from anybody. Our first instinct is often to retaliate and get even, to pay back and get revenge. The fans like this, coaches often like this, and even our teammates like this. In many ways, this mentality is built into a hockey player’s blood. While we might be able to justify being cut throat with our enemies, it’s a bit harder to justify this behavior when it spills over into other aspects of our lives, even into the dressing room.

When we face various challenges in life, Romans 12 reminds us to “be patient” and “to give thought” before anything else. Of course, this is not easy. It seems to run against all that we know as hockey people. But, it’s part of being a good teammate. We are to be slow to speak and act even if those around us are getting under our skin. We are reminded to think about what is honorable before we lash out at those around us.

You may be asking yourself, “how can I ever do this?”
My response would be to remind yourself often (perhaps before every time you walk into the rink) of the patience of God in Christ. God does not punish us the instant we sin against Him.

He doesn’t look to “get revenge” right away the moment we dishonor Him. Instead, He is patient. He proves His patience through His Son, Jesus Christ. Remind yourself of what God has done and His patience. Then, try to do the same with your teammates.

***Questions***

* Do you think before you speak or act?
* Are others hesitant of telling you things because of fear in your reaction?
* Why do certain teammates anger you so much?

**Be Joyful**
*“Rejoice in hope…” - Romans 12:12*
*“Rejoice with those who rejoice…” - Romans 12:15*

It is very hard to see others succeed when we are not. When life is not going our way, the last thing we want to do is celebrate with others as things seem to fall into their lap. It stings to watch as your teammates play and play well, while you sit the bench. It is heartbreaking to watch the coach praise that one teammate over and over again in a drill, while every time you practice coach finds something wrong. It’s so frustrating to listen to others in the dressing room talk about their new skates and hockey sticks, while you are using hand me down goods from your older siblings. Even if those around you are close friends or family members, it’s hard to be joyful in these times. The last thing we want to do in moments like this is REJOICE.

And if we’re not careful, we begin to start hoping things don’t go well for those closest to us. If we don’t watch out, we soon find ourselves rejoicing when life turns sour for our teammates. After all, if things aren’t working out for us, why should others get the glory. It just doesn’t seem fair!!

But this is not what a good teammate does. According to Romans 12, a good teammate is one who is willing to rejoice when others are rejoicing. A good teammate is one who mourns when others are mourning. When we do the opposite and rejoice when others mourn and mourn when others rejoice, we make a statement that life should really be about “ME”. This kind of mentality is steeped in selfishness. A selfishness that is not beneficial for the good of our teammates or our own soul. Instead, we should seek to be teammates who model the joy of Christ to others. Not just when things are going our way, but in all things.

***Questions***

* Are you jealous of your teammates? Why or Why not?
* Would you rather play well and lose or win and play poorly?
* How can you be more joyful of your teammates?

**Be Peaceful**
*“Live in harmony with one another…” - Romans 12:16
“If possible...live peaceably with all…” - Romans 12:18*

Have you ever played on or watched a team that was “in sync”? A team that played with unity, everybody doing their job and moving together as one unit. It’s a beautiful thing. So many different parts coming together to form a work of art. We know it when we see it, and we admire the harmony.

On the flip side, have you ever played on or watched a team that was “out of sync”? A team that played disjointed, everyone doing their own thing and moving in opposite directions. It’s a cringe worthy thing to behold. Often times, it’s not just on the ice, but the lack of harmony is evident on the bench and off the ice. Teammates blaming each other, bickering, and at odds with one another. We know it when we see it, and we despise the discord.

Romans 12 makes it clear we are to seek peace with our teammates, “so far as it depends on you.” We are to do everything we can to make sure that our relationships at the rink are in harmony. Whether that be in the locker room, the lobby, the bench, or on the ice. A good teammate doesn’t stir the pot and look to rile up others. A good teammate doesn’t create chaos by blaming his linemates for a bad pass. A good teammate doesn’t always try to prove himself right and others wrong. Instead, a good teammate seeks peace and does whatever he can to live in harmony.

***Questions***

* Are you always “stirring the pot” in the dressing room or on the bench?
* Is your interaction with teammates mostly arguments?