

February 18, 2018

Faithful Disciples

Acts 9:36-43

The winter Olympics are underway in PyeongChang, South Korea, and American athletes like Hilary Knight, power forward for the USA women's hockey team, have trained for years to reach this level of elite sports. When asked what has been the biggest obstacle, Knight replied, "Shattering the ice ceiling. We put so [many] limits on what women are capable of doing. . . . It's time for equality." When she first began training for the USA hockey team, she discovered that she could not afford to live in Boston and train the hours she needed to, in contrast to the men who have the financial backing to ensure the team is their fulltime job. Knight champions for "equitable support" for women's hockey, including benefits, pay, game schedules, and public relations.¹

Sometimes our Christian faith calls us to try something we believe or have been told is beyond our capabilities. In the events recorded in today's text, Peter depended on his faith to "[motivate] him to attempt something that he was not certain would succeed," raising Tabitha from the dead.² Our student book author writes, "We must find the balance between taking risks and going beyond our expectations and accepting that we have limitations." We must ask if something is beyond our capabilities or simply beyond our expectations.

For Hilary Knight, she saw someone else's expectations imposing a limit on her capabilities. She knew she could do more, train harder, and succeed if she received equitable resources. She is working to create an environment where future female athletes can receive the same support as men, so young women can achieve goals within their capabilities and beyond expectations.

1. When has your faith called you to try something you believed was beyond your capabilities? What was the result, and how was your faith deepened?
2. How do expectations define capabilities? How can we discern the difference between limited capabilities and limited expectations?
3. How does your faith community encourage children and youth to work toward goals? How does your faith community teach the lessons of failure as well as success?

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¹From nbcnews.com/nightly-news/video/sochi-may-have-been-a-heartbreak-but-hilary-knight-is-ready-for-gold-in-pyeongchang-1118219331694.

²From *Adult Bible Studies*, Winter 2017–2018, by Chuck Aaron (Cokesbury, 2017); page 87.

³From *Adult Bible Studies*; page 88.