



JANIE REED

LAVISH DISPLAY OF TRUST

Janie Reed is an American softball outfielder who plays for Team USA. The youngest, yet most decorated softball player of three sisters, Janie is married to a professional American baseball player who shares her love for sports. Her goal is to make a difference in women's sports and share the Gospel with the world.

Growing up, I was never the standout player. I was not the girl who people would watch and say, "She is going to have the chance to play in the Olympics one day." Heading into the Olympic tryouts was intimidating. It's hard to enter into a competition among you and your own teammates. While aiming to make the Olympic team, I often had to remind myself that I'm competing for one of the 18 spots, not against a certain person.

On the night before the tryouts, a few of us invited all our teammates to join in what has become an annual prayer gathering before tryouts begin. Out of the 29 girls on the team, 20 showed up. This tradition has been so helpful for all of us. With us all being in the same position of trying to make the team, we're able to remind each other that we're there to help each other through the crazy pressure we're experiencing. Instead of hindering each other, we're choosing to help each other.

On the last morning of tryouts, I had a sinking feeling that this may be it — this may be the last time I play softball ... ever. My chance to show the Olympic committee that I had what it takes was almost over and I knew I hadn't played my best. I wasn't ready to be done. With these thoughts haunting me, I called over my teammate



"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness and into His wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." — 1 Peter 2:9-10



and asked for prayer. After she prayed with me, we looked up to see two of our teammates doing the same. I was struck with the incredible community we've been given on this team. When one of us is down or feeling discouraged, God gives us a teammate to lift us up.

Thankfully, the selection committee doesn't just take into account the performance of the athletes during these four days, they are watching you play throughout the year. And among the amazing talent that surrounded the tryout facility, there wasn't one player that was going to blow another one away. When I saw the list was posted and then found my name on it, I was so humbled.

When I saw my name on that list, I remembered how God has truly brought me here in His power; this was not my own doing. I worked so hard leading up to those tryouts — hitting for hours every night for weeks, with no days off. If I would have played really well during those four days and then made the team, I would have taken much of the credit for it. But the way it happened, God was showing me that even from the very beginning, He's had His hand on my journey.

Recently, I was reading a book in which the author was saying that our faith in God is about walking with God without knowing what the steps are. To do that, we have to display a lavish amount of trust. The way I prepare myself physically directly affects my confidence on the field. The same is true with my heart before God. The more I prepare my heart to trust in Him, the more confident I become that He is in control. As the author of this book put it, we have to care more about who we are dancing with than how our performance is.

Leading up to the Olympic tryouts, I found myself caring more about my performance than about God. I soon realized I have to consider it all loss for the sake of Christ. None of this was ever mine to begin with! Softball was gifted to me; it belongs to God. I have to value God — the One whom I'm walking through life with — more than I care about where He is leading me. I have to go with the flow no matter where He decides to take me. It's about letting go of rationalism and focusing on trust.

The deep desire of my heart is for someone who is looking at my Olympic journey to describe it as a lavish display of trust in God.



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