

Take Care of Those Tears

I had just gotten back from Thailand and wanted to get a little exercise in the gym on Saturday night. As usual the gym was full of rather excitable young people, running to and fro like so many projectiles flung out of a cannon.

A basketball game was ready to start and they thought that the rather tall professor from California, home of the Lakers and the land of the free should know something about the game invented in his heartland. I felt rather honored and donned the whistle and proceeded to act very knowledgeable despite the fact that I have never, ever officiated a basketball game in my life!

During the first quarter, while backpedaling to officiate the torrent of humanity rushing towards me, I felt a sharp and painful tear in my left calf. I immediately stepped off the court and assessed the damage.

Now I have injured and pulled most of my muscles in my life playing a wide variety of sports, but I knew this was different. After standing there for several minutes, I excused myself from the game and hobbled home. A visit to the campus doctor and a call to an orthopedic surgeon friend in California confirmed that I had torn my calf muscle and it would take a "long time" to heal.

Now nothing has ever taken a "long time" to heal in my life. But as I hobbled along day after day, the painful reality of a longer rehabilitation than usual eventually set in. So now I am an invalid, dutifully following my doctor's orders and restricting my movements as much as possible so that the leg can heal. I even got some crutches, the crowning glory of my total and complete humiliation.

I think we all have experienced that some tears of the human heart are very difficult to heal. They take time. They need rest. Some need professional counseling. And they all need the warmth of God's grace to transform the deep

wounds into healing rooms of His presence. May the Lord grant each of us, during this holiday season, a time to heal and wisdom to take care of those tears.