



Adult League Devotions Week 1

Introduction

Over the next few weeks we will be looking at what the Bible says about sport. Is there a theology of sport? For those of us who are involved in sport as Christians, this is a fundamental question. We need to understand sport as God sees it. We need to help others in our team, ministry or church to understand it. But, whether you are a Christian or not, it is still an intriguing question.

I believe passionately that God is interested in all of human life and that must include sport. Over the next few weeks, we will try to understand more of what the Bible says about sport and how that should affect us.

'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth; and God saw all that he had made and it was very good'. - Genesis 1:1, 31

If you want to know the Biblical view of adultery, it is not difficult to find it. God has said it is wrong. In the Ten Commandments you read, "You shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14). In order to work out God's view of sport we have to look into the Biblical principles and apply them to sport, in the same way as we would need to do with a host of human activities.

Genesis is the first book of the Bible and contains an account of the creation of the world. Two things are clear:

1. God is the creator of every single thing in his world.
2. The created things are pronounced over and over again to be good (Genesis 1:10, 12, 17, etc)

So did God create sport? The answer is yes and no! Of course God did not create sport - people did. It wasn't God who shot the ball and invented the game of basketball. God did not create the games we play. Yet it was God who created people and made them able to run, jump, kick and catch. Sport is simply organized play in which we can use the talents God has given us.

In the film Chariots of Fire, the words are attributed to Eric Liddell (1924 Olympic gold medallist), "God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast and when I run, I feel his pleasure." I am convinced that as we run, kick, play and compete we can equally bring glory to God.

This devotion sample is provided free of charge by CSR. This sample, and many other resources, can be found at the CSR website, <http://www.csr.org>.



It is good!

***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and God saw that it was good
- (Genesis 1:1, 10)***

Many of us were brought up to believe a kind of dualism - the belief that spirit (or reason) is inherently good and matter inherently evil. We think that an imaginary line may be drawn. All the important things about being a Christian, reading your Bible, praying and worshipping God, being faithful to your church, are above the line. They are good. Below the line is everything else that isn't spiritual - having a good time with your friend, playing sports, the arts, music, going out for dinner, sex, watching TV are things people tend to consider "unspiritual".

Genesis 1 rules out this kind of dualism. Everything that exists is created by God and is, in itself, good. **Of course how we use God's creation and how we act may please God or displease him.**

Genesis 1 tells us several times that God saw that it [what he had created] was good. The thought is repeated in 1 Timothy 4:4, "**For everything God created is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.**" God's creation is good and it is to be enjoyed. The material world matters and it is OK to enjoy it. We are not to feel guilty when we enjoy the physical or the material, thinking that we should really be more spiritual. For us that includes sports. It all come down to a right perspective.

Let's thank God for sports; the healthy benefits, the joy it brings us, and the life lessons we can take from them, and get out on the field/court/track and enjoy them.

Discussion Questions:

- 1. What are your thoughts on what you've just Read/Heard?**
- 2. What are some "Life Lessons" we can take from Sports?**
- 3. What's the "Take-A-Way" for tonight?**

Credit: This devotion was written by Rich Green, Connections Pastor at Mount Pleasant Christian Church (Greenwood, IN) and was adapted from devotional writings by Stuart Weir.