

The Pastor's Pen

January 22, 2012



It really is only a game. Sometimes we take sports too seriously, and in unhealthy and unspiritual ways. We need to remember which things that are substantively a part of life and which things which are just a game. We need to work hard on keeping that from getting twisted.

I mention this because of a couple a situations surrounding the National Football League. There is no spectator sport that I like to watch more than the NFL. I have gone to a few

games, mostly to see the Titans, but enjoy it almost as much in front of my television. But I work to keep it in perspective.

I mention this because of some situations regarding NFL games that are unsettling. One is the account of a man in Georgia who was a New Orleans Saints fan who shot two San Francisco 49ers fans because they were cheering for their team in an Applebee's Restaurant. One is in serious condition. It boggles my mind that one would compromise another human's life. It takes it to another low when it is over something as meaningless as a sports event.

On another note, now that the Denver Broncos football time has lost and are out of the playoffs I want to confess that I have mixed feelings about their quarterback Tim Tebow. Tim Tebow is the quarterback for the Denver Broncos. Though many professional analysts clearly state that he does not have the skills one would normally expect out of a quarterback at the professional level he was able to do something that was beyond the expectation of him. The Broncos had lost four of their first five games of the season and decided to insert Tim Tebow as the starting quarterback. Tebow was able to lead the Broncos to victory and eventually a string of victories were to follow, with many of those victories coming in dramatic fashion. They won enough games to make it to the playoffs and then beat a favored Pittsburgh Steelers team. However, the following week the Broncos lost badly to the New England Patriots.

Even though many NFL teams have had miraculous finishes to their season and have gone on and won playoff games there are one characteristic about Tim Tebow that I feel warrants my taking the time to write about it. Tebow is very strong in his Christian faith. I believe that his faith is clear and sincere. Tebow could be seen praying during the game at various points and even after the game, regardless of the outcome. Praying is what is expected of Christians (James 5:16). And even in these situations prayer is more than appropriate. That is not where my mixed feelings come in.

I have mixed feelings because there will be those who have misinterpretations when they see him praying. Because he has had success on the field this year some have come to believe that his success is divine intervention because of his faith. God does intervene in our lives. Whether it is Moses and the people of Israel crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 14) or Martin Luther King Jr. and many others seeking to cross the Edmund Pettis Bridge in Alabama God is working on behalf of them. But I get concerned that there are those who feel God cares about who wins a football game. God does not roll like that. God is concerned about things that add to the quality and character of life (John 10:10). God is concerned about our understanding that we need to give him Glory for the things he does do for us, whether they are ordinary or extraordinary (Revelation 19:7).

Enjoy games, and other recreational activities. But don't let them consume you to the degree that you lose perspective on things which really matter.

Kelly M. Smith Jr.