

To Whom be the Glory?

Ready:

“They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.” - Romans 1:25 (NIV)

Set

Do you remember the first time you scored in sports? Maybe it was a touchdown, a basket, a kill, a home run or a match point. For a lot of us, once it happened, we could hardly resist telling everyone about it.

As we get older, the stakes seem to get higher—the significance greater. Game-winning goals, last-second stops on the goal-line, blocked shots, fourth-quarter buzzer-beaters, walk-off home runs...We're not playing t-ball anymore. The plays we make as we age can win or lose games and even championships. And if we're involved in successfully making those plays, it's often hard to contain our pride. We want to ask people, “Did you hear about what I did?” or, “Did you see my [fill in the blank] play?” It's so easy to bask in the glory of our own self-righteousness.

It has become far too common for us to “worship and serve created things,” like ourselves, rather than our Creator. But what can we accomplish on our own? What can we do to put ourselves in the spotlight? We are just the created things—not the Creator Himself. Still, we take pride in ourselves for our fitness level or our accomplishments on the field. We want to glorify our own strength and abilities, when, all the while, we should be deflecting the glory and honor to the Lord.

Most of us have heard the story of Moses and how, after he had been away from the Israelites for a while, he came back to find them worshiping a golden calf. He condemned them for doing so because they shouldn't have been worshiping anything but the Lord. If you're like me, when you first read that story, you might have skimmed quickly over it and thought, “I don't have a problem worshiping shiny objects or cows.”

But our actions often state otherwise. If we really examine ourselves, we may see that we worship conference titles and championship trophies. We strive after these shiny things more than we strive after God. I'm not saying that God is calling us to yield to our opposition or to be weak. God wants us to be excellent in all things, including sports. And it's okay to get excited when we do well or make a great play, but we need to understand that it isn't about what WE do or accomplish, but what HE can accomplish in us and through us.

Today, let's not seek out praise from others for personal fulfillment, but instead, seek out great ways to bring Him glory in all things.

Go

1. Have you ever made a play that ended up bringing you praise from friends, fans and teammates? How did you respond?
2. How can you use your athletic success to bring Him glory?
3. If you're not a current athlete, how does this lesson apply to your job, education or life situation?

Workout

Proverbs 22:29 Romans 1:21-25 Ephesians 3:20-21 Hebrews 6:10 Revelation 4:11

Bible Reference:

Revelation 4



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