

An Athlete's X-Ray Vision

n/a

Ready:

By obedience to the truth, having purified yourselves for sincere love of the brothers, love one another earnestly from a pure heart. — 1 Peter 1:22

Set

When I was in high school, I was recruited to play for a prominent summer baseball team. It was a boost to my ego. However, early into the season it was obvious that my coach cared more about the reputation of the team than he did for the players. He'd say things that sounded helpful, but were in truth criticisms, such as "I am only trying to make you a better player," or "This will give you better exposure for the future." He wasn't fooling anyone. Athletes have x-ray vision into a coach's heart. We knew that all he cared about was winning, and it affected our performance. I noticed later that this team fielded a different roster from year to year. Nobody wants to play for a coach like that. As athletes, we look up to our coaches, putting them on pedestals, craving their approval and love.

When I became a coach, I promised myself that winning would never take precedence over my players. As coaches we have a tremendous opportunity and responsibility to forge these young athletes into men and women of character who are devoted to God. They cannot be a means to an end. For some of these athletes, the love we show them may be the only love they receive. So let's love our athletes earnestly, "from a pure heart" (1 Pt 1:22).

Go

1. Have you ever treated your players as a "means to an end"?
2. Do your players know that their worth as persons is more important to you than their worth as players? How have you expressed this?
3. What can you do to improve your sincerity of heart?

Workout

Extra Reading: Romans 12:9; 1 John 3:18

Overtime

Lord Jesus, please give me a sincere heart for my team. Forgive me the times I don't love them as I should, caring more about their contribution than their heart and soul. Only You love perfectly, but use me, with all my faults, to love these athletes whom You have entrusted to me. It is by Your power and strength that I am capable of this sincerity of heart. I pray this in your precious name. Amen.



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