

Performance

Ready:

"Clean living before God and justice with our neighbors mean far more to GOD than religious performance."
-Proverbs 21:3 (MSG)

Set

The big item of the week has been the surprise firing of Tyrone Willingham after completing only three seasons of his five-year contract as the head football coach at Notre Dame. Kirk Herbstreit, analyst for ESPN's College GameDay, said, "This firing is all about wins and losses ... it's about failing to produce wins." The Notre Dame AD said Willingham was an "outstanding coach" with an "impeccable reputation." Indeed, it seems as if this decision all boiled down to one thing: performance.

We live in a world where performance is constantly being judged. How we perform can get us more playing time, a raise, a promotion, publicity, or just the opposite if our performance is poor. Thus, it's understandable that, as Christians, we sometimes get caught up in "doing the Christian thing" for the wrong reasons. Sometimes we try to perform good "works" to earn our salvation or God's favor. But we must know that there's nothing we can do to earn salvation other than receive Jesus as Lord and Savior (Ephesians 2:8). We are to follow God's commands and "work out" our faith (John 14:15, James 2), but we are to commit "works" of faith out of a deep love for God, not as a performance to gain favor with God, or worse, others. We may think this is elementary teaching, but check your motives. You may be surprised. I, for one, have a left hand that needs to be a little more ignorant (see Matthew 6:3).

Go

1. Think of something you did well recently.
2. What was your motivation for performing well?
3. How can you make pleasing God your goal in all that you do?

Workout

Matthew 6:1-3
John 14:15
Ephesians 2:8
James 2:14-26

Bible Reference:

James 2



8701 Leeds Road | Kansas City, MO 64129 | 800.289.0909

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