

Teamwork

by Wayne Goff

Oh no, the NFL is back!

Yes, I am a big football fan, but I know many wives, mothers and daughters are not. Also, as a gospel preacher, I know that the noon kickoff can be disconcerting to those trying to focus on the morning sermon. I'm not fond of that problem.

But on the other hand, the New Testament borrowed from the Olympic Games popular and prevalent in the first century and made numerous good applications from them (1 Cor. 9:24-25; 2 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 12:1). So is there anything we can learn from modern-day football that we can apply to Christianity?

Teamwork is one of the most obvious necessities in football. Of all the modern sports, football is more team-oriented than just about all the others. I guess baseball would run a close second. But football requires cooperation from everyone on the team. On offense, the quarterback, the running back, and a wide receiver might get most of the glory from a successful drive that ends in a score. But none of those players could succeed without the full cooperation of all the other offensive players. The center has to snap the ball on the proper count, the linemen have to block the defensive players, and even those in the backfield have to execute to near perfection. Speed and technology in today's game has created only a hairline's difference between success and failure! Everyone has to work together.

Likewise, on the defensive side of the ball, it only takes one player out of position to result in disaster! Everybody else can beat their opponent, but if the running back gets loose, or the wide receiver gets behind everyone, the offense will most often score! Therefore, the defense has just lost.

Furthermore, there seems to be as many coaches on the sidelines as players! There's the head coach, the assistant coach, the offensive coordinator, the defensive coordinator, the special teams guru, etc.!

The Local Church

Teamwork and cooperation in the local church are essential to a successful congregation, Eph. 4:16; Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12. The elders must properly shepherd the flock (1 Pet. 5:2-3). Every member must honor the eldership and work harmoniously with them (Heb. 13:7, 17). The deacons must be selfless servants (Acts 6:3-6). Those who assist in worship greatly affect the atmosphere: song leader, leaders in prayer, those who assist at the Lord's table, etc. And finally, the preacher must have studied his lesson well in order to present the truth effectively.

It just takes one missing ingredient to destroy what God designed for our edification. Then trouble arises and people quickly become dismayed. It is so much easier to tear down a good work than it is to build one up. Be a supporter!

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