

**General Topics :: Justifying Idols (sports)**

**Justifying Idols (sports), on: 2011/10/24 10:50**

Most of you know I have been involved in sports, particularly (American) football. I've coached, been in management, etc. I've been involved in both secular football programs and Christian programs.

This year I took off just to enjoy watching my kids play. Now that football season is coming to a close I have made some observations... and some enemies.

I think most "Christian" sports organizations, particularly for our youth... are nothing more than a way to justify our idolatry. The idol being SPORTS. I've never paid attention to it before, but it is amazing how much families will sacrifice financially, time-wise and energy-wise so their kids can play sports. Yet these same people can only seem to find the time to come to church just on Sunday morning. Call for corporate prayer on Wednesday night? Oh... can't do it.

I'm guilty too, so the finger points straight back at me.

People say (and I've said this): Football teaches boys to be men. It teaches great life lessons and skills. Well, there is truth in that. But isn't that akin to saying the Bible is not sufficient? When an athlete spends 10 hours a week at practice and 10 hours a week working out on his own... but never opens his Bible outside of church... what life lessons is he learning?

And what parents are willing to put up with from some coaches amazes me as well. I watched a head coach of a Christian team in a Christian league this year cuss like a sailor at his team until management threatened to kick him out... a month into the season. He called several players "worthless" to their faces. Technically (by legal definition) he assaulted a member of the team's management... and then during a game he technically assaulted one of the players.

And this man is a deacon at a very large church.

Then there is the behavior of some of the parents. Parental behavior in Christian leagues is no different than in secular leagues. I've seen both. It sickens me.

What is going on? Idolatry is what is going on. We love our sports so much we are willing to sacrifice everything for it... time, money, ethics... even the influences on our kids. The coach sets a horrible example for teenage boys, but it's okay because they are learning life lessons and winning games!

Common... really?

Pride of life. That's what it is. Idolatry.

Spend 15 minutes with someone and you know what motivates them. Whatever motivates them is their god.

Parents, stop sacrificing your children to idols. Sports are not a sin. But what is a sin is the amount of sacrifice we are willing to make so Johnny or Mary can have a moment in the spotlight. When people see us they should see Jesus... not a kid who's "got game".

More of Him and less of me.

I think I am done with sports.

Krispy

**Re: Justifying Idols (sports) - posted by enid, on: 2011/10/24 10:59**

Well, you've said it all.

People will go out of their way to justify worshipping their 'god', because of that just that, it is their god.

If some had the heartbeat for God that they have for sports they would be amazing.

The word of God tells us to not have any god before Him, Exodus 20v2. Yet, somehow...

I'll leave it at that.

**Re: Justifying Idols (sports) - posted by DEADn (), on: 2011/10/24 11:05**

KK

What you are also revealing is a reason why kids are doing so poorly in school. There is more emphasis placed on sport in general than on education. Thus America falls so hard.

I have no kids but my brother has 3 kids. One of them is currently involved in baseball and I always hear the usually tiredness in them when they have practice and games and those games turn into playoffs and and so forth. It really drags a family through the mud and yet how much valuable time is lost in education or even involvement in the church, for that matter.

Yet, I think this whole scenerio comes from males side of things.

I know for myself, College football is my main course for sports. Saturday is my 'picnic day' yet ever other weekend I go to a Saturday night service-I have to work every other weekend. This church has a Saturday night service SO, I get to watch the first half of a 3:30pm game and miss the rest of it. I deal with it though.

All of this stuff does start at home and parents instill in their kids what they think is important. Many times it is sports over the mind and over religious belief.

Does any of this make any sense? I felt like I just got rambling about stuff.

**Re: - posted by mama27, on: 2011/10/24 11:11**

You are courageous to post on this topic. I wanted to recommend a message on the subject that helped and guided us in the raising of our children. My husband was raised on sports, and my father and brother worshiped the same idol when I was growing up. So....after my H and I were saved, we took the position of not having our 3 sons join in on organized sporting events....(I am not saying I have any problem with a church picnic where softball is played, or volleyball in a back yard - it is organized sports teams I am speaking to).....Unfortunately my sons don't have the relationship with the Lord that they should, and so as young adults are feeling that they were deprived in how we raised them. But we have to answer to the Lord, and I would not do things differently.

I am not putting up any man's word, but this message helped clarify Scriptural principles that would point to the detriments involved in sports. I recommend it for any who would be interested.

[www.charityministries.org](http://www.charityministries.org) - "The Christian View of Sports" by Alex Marini

**Re: , on: 2011/10/24 11:19**

Whoa Krispe. You stepum on sacred cow. I live in Ark. where Razorback religion rules. You know they shout their whooooo pig suuuueerry. But then the very same ones take you to task for singing too loudly in church as they nurse their hangovers. But yeah bro. You bring up some valid points.

Blaine

**Re: , on: 2011/10/24 11:38**

This year was an eye opener for me... you cant see it when you're directly involved, such as coaching etc.

But just laying back this year, wow.

And my observations and comments have more than ticked off a few. It's like heresy to speak out about some of the things I've been observing.

Some people act like I'm a traitor.

Krispy

**Re: Justifying Idols (sports) - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/10/24 11:44**

Steve, only you could have said it as well as you did.

WOW!

Once again you are proving a valuable point: life is a series of growth and learning and we do well to submit to it.

I appreciate your testimony, Krispy. Thanks for sharing.

ginnyrose

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/10/24 11:47**

QUOTE:

"Some people act like I'm a traitor."

No doubt - given your past involvement in it.

Just keep on listening to the LORD...he takes you to some very interesting places but do not expect the approval of the masses.

God bless you, Krispy, and your boys, especially.

ginnyrose

**Re: , on: 2011/10/24 11:59**

Quote:

-----but do not expect the approval of the masses.  
-----

Being a part of this forum has taught me that! lol

Krispy

**Re: - posted by ThyKingCome (), on: 2011/10/24 13:14**

Krispy, thank you for sharing on this subject. I could not agree with you more. Sadly, this topic will RARELY ever be spoken on inside a church service, for the pastor would have to risk losing respect and possibly church members...but it does need to be addressed nonetheless!

It's the devil's trojan horse into the family circle. Father's who play softball 2 or 3 nights a week (even in Church leagues) don't know how much they are sacrificing or what they are teaching their children about priorities.

I work with professing Christians who pretty much take a Christian hiatus during sports season to get their kids to all of their practices, games, awards ceremonies etc. It's very tragic and very grieving.

Exposed idol worship will always produce a lashback, that is why speaking out on this subject will always bring it. No one is saying that enjoying a game or having your kids play sports is sin, but if it comes at the expense of God's priority in the home then it has progressed into the realm of idolatry. That's what idolatry is...having another god before the Lord God. It doesn't have to be a golden calf or bronze serpent either, just something that holds a higher place of affection, attention and priority in our lives.

Lord give us eyes to see these things happening in our generation and give us grace to avoid them ourselves and warn others with love and tears.

**Re: , on: 2011/10/24 16:06**

Yes, exactly. And Christian sports leagues are worse when it comes to time commitment, etc. Especially for homeschool families.

We have 2 sports leagues in our area for homeschoolers. One has basketball, volleyball, soccer, baseball, etc... and the other one is football.

Some of the games are FOUR hours away. Not just time is involved in that, but also gas and food on the road! During the basketball season there will be 2 or 3 away games during the week sometimes. Some families travel 2 to 4 hours away for games... 2 or 3 times a week!

Add that to the \$400 registration fee (per child) to participate, and the cost of buying your own uniform, cleats, etc... And these are 1 income homeschool families!

Crazy...even the godless public schools don't demand that much time commitment from families.

The only good thing I can say about Christian sports leagues right now is that at least they don't play/practice on Sunday. (Give it time tho!)

Krispy

**Re: - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2011/10/24 20:29**

Ezekiel 16:20-21 (KJV)  
20 Is this

This chapter is worth meditating in this context.

**Re: Justifying Idols (sports) - posted by Scott1969 (), on: 2011/10/24 23:53**

Good stuff, Krispy. I live in Louisiana where the Saints and LSU are king in sports. When the Saints won the Super Bowl , a man asked me " How 'bout them Saints ? " . I told him that I didn't keep up with sports. He thought that I was crazy !! I tell people that I keep up with the saints of the Most High God ! These saints win every Sunday of the year ! Thanks for taking a stand !

**Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2011/10/25 3:46**

amen

what is highly esteemed among men , is an abomination in the sight of the lord

what could be more highly esteemed above sport  
,makes me sick

tho used to be good at a number of sports

competitiveness is of the devil and is rooted in pride

people think im weird when i say i dont follow any sports

it is following a bunch of idolaters,im trying to sound crude

but im sure there are true christians who will allow themselves to love watching this sort of contraband ,and i still love them but i cant understand them regarding it

but i still do go fishing , gives me time to pray and meditate and catch food  
and i hunt occasionally ,but i try with all grace to do it to the glory of god ,and go through times of giving it up ,,,,,,and never take it seriously and compete with a desire to be better than others ,,

amen krispy

**Re: Justifying Idols (sports) - posted by iansmith (), on: 2011/10/25 5:34**

Challenging post--and something that I was thinking about the other day as I sat in Starbucks and listened to a young man working with a sports-ministry try to share his vision for the sports 'platform' with a prospective supporter.

I read an article a few months ago on the Gospel Coalition website about the dangers of mixing Christianity and the idolatry of modern american sporting, but truthfully these kinds of things fall on deaf ears.

Having recently lived in a town with a well known Christian College, I have seen how there is a double standard of expectations for those students involved in sports on the campus--everyone knows that the Football players get drunk, skip chapel, hook up with their girlfriends, but they tolerate it, because sports are important.

Unfortunately, all too often, this idol is challenged by people who don't love sports, which is why I find your post engaging. I've heard several preachers attack the idolatry of sports, but usually they're the ones with no natural affinity towards playing or watching sports.

Its one thing if a former NFL quarterback gets up and attacks the idolatry of sports, and another if an overweight, nearsighted, uncoordinated theologian gets up and does it. I happen to fall into the latter group as opposed to the former, and I wouldn't be one to attack this problem head on, because I know that I personally don't find sports all that engaging, and I think my hearers would know my bias and dismiss it without hearing the heart of the matter.

Just some thoughts from someone who can't sleep.

**Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2011/10/25 6:41**

Very interesting insight Krispy from someone involved as you were.

Over here in the UK it is a bit different and not such a big issue in general with Christians. Obviously we play the 'original' football over here (wrongly called soccer:). However it's a big thing in the world and in the workplace the first and most often subject discussed is which team did what and 'who do you support?' So when you say I don't it's almost seen as there's something wrong with you!

I used to be a fan of watching football (soccer), but cannot see profit in it anymore, so when you do get guys at church wanting to discuss this or some other sport, you think 'give me a break! I have enough of this vain talk at work, I don't want it here'.

Funny, we had a visiting pastor from the USA speak at our church the other Sunday and he was big into college football. He used loads of illustrations from football, but most of the congregation were women and all were Brits, so no only was it completely lost on most, but mostly it was just a motivational talk without the centrality of Christ being preached.

**Re: , on: 2011/10/25 7:25**

Quote:

-----Unfortunately, all too often, this idol is challenged by people who don't love sports, which is why I find your post engaging. I've heard several preachers attack the idolatry of sports, but usually they're the ones with no natural affinity towards playing or watching sports.  
-----

I agree... I used to scoff preachers or other Christians who obviously had no inclination toward sports. To me, they didn't "get it". Couldn't they see that we were molding warriors? That because of us (coaches) we were raising up a generation of Joshua's who were going to turn the world upside down for Christ?

What foolishness and arrogance for me and others to think such things. The reality is that we wanted to win. Period.

Now, does that mean that we did no good in the lives of those I coached? Of course not... The Lord used me in a lot of ways. A lot of guys who played for me came from broken homes and needed discipline and a male role model. And I was not bashful about my faith.

What I am discussing here though is CHRISTIANS' obsession with sports. Would that Christians were obsessed with Christ! And we justify it by claiming to be building "warriors for Christ".

I have a suggestion... if you want to help build warriors for Christ... open up a Bible and TEACH THEM. Learning how to run a passing route, or how to wrap up and tackle properly doesn't teach them how to stand boldly for Christ in this world.

Christians need to stop fooling themselves.

Last night I got drawn into Monday Night Football (Mainly because I couldn't believe how bad the Ravens and the Jags were!) I still love the game, and that's ok! But to spend hours upon hours upon hours on it... that's sin.

Krispy

**Re: - posted by Scott1969 (), on: 2011/10/25 19:50**

Hey, Krispy ! I just heard Leonard Ravenhill, on the message " A Burning Heart ", say that America has a king called sports and its queen is entertainment !

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/10/29 10:05**

Krispy,

Your lead post on this thread has blessed me so much, has been on my mind a lot since I read it.

We are having weekend meetings with a brother from GA ministering. He spoke on the first commandment, "Thou shalt love the LORD your God..."

In his sermon he touched on an area that can interfere in obeying this commandment. He mentioned sports, how it can be idolatrous and gave his testimony of how God convicted him. If I would not know otherwise, I could almost believe you and him were the one and same person!

Anyhow, I was so blessed, doubly blessed!

Just thought I would share this...

ginnyrose

**Re: - posted by sarahsdream, on: 2011/10/29 11:27**

I understand what you are saying.

If I were to add or change one thing, I would not say that the "Bible teaches boys to be men", but rather it is fathers that teach each boy to be a man. And not just fathers, but fathers that are submitted to the Lord and walking in Love.

There are a lot of people (both men and women) that read the Bible and are very immature.

No one becomes a mature man or woman until they submit to the only True Man (Jesus).

The root problem is not football, but our hearts.

Sarah

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/10/29 11:49**

Scott wrote:

"Hey, Krispy ! I just heard Leonard Ravenhill, on the message " A Burning Heart ", say that America has a king called sports and it's queen is entertainment!"

Is it OK if I read it, too, Scott?

Just wanted to say I think Leonard was spot on with his evaluation.

The LORD is still working with me to help me understand what kind of entertainment is a waste of time.

**Re: ginnyrose - posted by Scott1969 (), on: 2011/11/1 20:12**

1 Corinthians 10: 31 says : Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

I believe the music that we listen to and the books that we read should be godly. My wife reads books by Beverly Lewis, Lori Wick, and other Christian authors. Sorry, Krispy ! I wasn't trying to veer off the subject of the thread ! Everything we do needs to be soaked with prayer ! Thanks !

**Re: , on: 2011/11/2 7:50**

I saw my son do something this weekend that showed the influence a coach can have. This coaches attitude this year was as anything but godly.

I won't go into detail what my son did during the game just in case he reads this, but suffice it to say that he should have gotten a flag for unsportsmanlike conduct. I was shocked to see him do what he did, and we butted heads about it the next day... and he found himself being severely corrected by dear ol' dad.

That's what resulted from having sports become an idol, and being under a "Christian" coach who demonstrated less than Christian behavior all season.

Krispy

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/11/2 14:30**

Entertainment: what entertainment is simply plain fun and what is not?

QUOTE:

"Everything we do needs to be soaked with prayer! Thanks!"

You are right. This summer we went to a place I was having second thoughts about and wish since then we had saved our money..SIGH We were there before...it was fun, exciting but it had deteriorated since then...

**Re: - posted by njhoover, on: 2011/11/2 17:14**

"Are you not children of transgression,  
the offspring of deceit,  
you who burn with lust among the oaks, a  
under every green tree,  
WHO SLAUGHTER YOUR CHILDREN IN THE VALLEYS,  
under the clefts of the rocks?"  
Isaiah 57:4-5

I always thought this passage had a double meaning.

Where do football players play? In concrete valleys.

What are we doing by encouraging them to play? Sacrifice their bodies.