

Jeremy Lin Praises Manny Pacquiao for Outspoken Faith

When boxer **Manny Pacquiao** gets hit with a good punch, he raises his hands to acknowledge his opponents' effort, and to signal that he's unhurt. The former world champion now raises his hands in a different arena and for a different reason—in surrender to **God**.

The first and only eight-division world champion (he has actually won 10 titles), the Filipino boxer recently received **salvation**, is now fighting for **Jesus** and has begun preaching the **gospel** in his native country.

Pacquiao wants to make sure that people know his **faith** is real and not simply a fluff statement.

"We're not talking about religion here, but a relationship with God," Pacquiao, who has taken nearly a year off from the ring, told GMA News of the Phillipines. "To know the secret to the **kingdom of heaven** is like planting seeds in the vineyard.

For someone who had rarely picked up the **Word of God** previously, Pacquiao is now a firm believer in the power it holds.

"The **Bible** is the manual to our lives," Pacquiao said. "How can we know how to live when we don't read our own manual."

Fellow athlete **Jeremy Lin**, a guard for the NBA's Houston Rockets, told GMA News he's proud of Pacquiao for voicing his faith. Many athletes or celebrities who do so, including former NFL quarterback **Tim Tebow**, are often crucified in the media for it.

"Everyone has the right to be themselves," said Lin, who has become the NBA's version of Tebow when it comes to his

outspoken faith in God. "I think for him to talk about what's important to him ... I don't think anybody should be able to see what he can or can't say who he is as a person. As long as he's trying to be real, that's fine.

"It's a constant battle. We're human and there's the constant element of pride that you have to fight. I just want to be as much of myself as I can, and be as real and as authentic as I can be."

Pacquiao doesn't mind using his celebrity to attract an audience. It's only then that he can switch gears and talk to them about God.

After a pair of losses to Timothy Bradley and Juan Manuel Marquez in 2012, Pacquiao will return to the ring on Nov. 23 against hungry Mexican-American fighter Brandon "Bam Bam" Rios.