

The Thrill of Defeat and the Agony of Victory

Beginning in April of 1961 through January 3, 1998, Saturday afternoons were introduced by Jim McKay "... spanning the globe to bring you the constant variety of sports ... the thrill of victory ... and the agony of defeat ... the human drama of athletic competition ... This is ABC's *Wide World of Sports*."

I think Jim had it backwards. There is so much more potential for agony in victory. And defeat can catalyze positive change.

Victories often lead to the celebration of self. Winning leaders can become independent of God and begin to believe "I can do anything."

It is in defeat that we might be more likely to cry out, "Help me Lord, I can't do this without You."

Man seems to place a lot of emphasis on winning and losing. Competitors pray to win on both sides of the field. We even use the label "loser" to describe others who don't measure up to certain standards or expectations. I don't believe the word "loser" is in the Bible. The word "lost" is certainly a focus of the New Testament.

Are losers lost? I don't find the word "winner" in the Bible, either. Perhaps man-made labels don't translate well from ancient manuscripts.

I'm reminded of David's second attack on the Philistines. David had shamed the Philistines in a previous battle. David had just been anointed king of Israel. The Philistines planned a new attack.

David went to the Lord about how to win again. Lesser kings

may have attacked the Philistines using the winning battle plan from the first attack. It's hard to change a winning game plan.

David waited on the Lord to provide direction even after a convincing victory. This is a model of leadership.

A chest-pounding "winner" may have simply charged on ahead to certain doom. The Lord showed David a new path to victory.

David didn't bask in the thrill of victory. Victory can cloud judgment.

As we span the globe to win the lost, we can't be dependent upon how we have won other victories. We cannot do what we've always done simply because we seemed to be winning.

We must wait for a fresh anointing. We need Him more today than yesterday.

Who will tell the winners they are losing?

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Today's Scripture

“Once again, the Philistines went up and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. When David inquired of the Lord, He said, ‘You shall not go up. Circle around behind them and come against them opposite the trees. When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the trees, pay attention, because at that point the Lord is going before you to defeat the army of the Philistines.’ So David did just as the Lord commanded, and he defeated the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer” (2 Sam. 5:22-25).

Platform Tip No. 71

Platform work is not a transaction. We live to give. We don’t give to get. That’s a transaction.

We don’t step onto any platform asking “is this worth my time?” Is the audience large enough for me to share my message?

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