

What God Showed Me Through the Kansas City Royals

Hebrews 11:1 *“Faith is the assurance of things you have hoped for, the absolute conviction that there are realities you’ve never seen.”*

Hebrews 12:1 *“So since we stand surrounded by all those who have gone before, an enormous cloud of witnesses, let us drop every extra weight, every sin that clings to us and slackens our pace, and let us run with endurance the long race set before us.”*

As a member of the Kansas City, Missouri community, as a lover of my city (which I learned how to do from Bill Johnson at Bethel Church in Redding, CA), as a lover of sports and as a lover of God, I learned a lot from the Kansas City Royals and I believe it will be a blessing to you as well, even if you don't live in this city. I learned that faith and endurance are the wonder twin powers that unlock world champions.

Many may or may not know, the Kansas City Royals baseball team has not been world champions since 1985, when George Brett, a famous baseball player, was on the team. For the past 30 years, people have watched the Royals lose year after pain staking year. Someone told me yesterday, they remember when you could show up at Kaufmann Stadium at 7pm and still park in the front lot and make it on time for the first pitch of the first inning. It was not a team people came out to see. Despite the consistent and continual loses, the leadership of this organization kept going back to the drawing board, looking for the right player combination, the right manager, the right people to make this team into champions.

Last year, with one of, if not the youngest, group of guys in the Major League came together under the leadership of manager

Ned Yost and they began to show signs of a rising. The mantra last year was We Believe, and the fans got behind the this slogan by showing up for games, buying Royals gear again and filling the stadium ever so slowly with people throughout the season. Making it to the World Series last year and losing was a huge let down for our city, but they came back this year with the belief that they could and would Take the Crown!

It took faith on the part of this city and this team to believe they could take the crown this year. Baseball seasons are long, arduous and filled with wins and losses, henceforth the need for both faith and endurance. But some of the lessons that have come out of this team, have been spoken by the media, or from others I know are phenomenal.

1. Back to original: the Royals are a hitting team, not a home run team. They call this old school baseball, because all other teams in the league are swinging for the fence and we are swinging to get on base.
2. The best way to take revenge is to win: when a pitcher deliberately tried to hit one of the Royals in the head, the team decided to win was the best revenge.
3. It's about the team, not just one player: even though they have an MVP for series, the team won this victory and no one showed a need to be a standout.
4. Make it reign, shock the media: *Sports Illustrated* has the Royals on the front cover of their latest issue which calls the Royals: the team we never imagined would win.
5. Ignite and excite a city: 800,000 people came out to the Royals parade at Union Station downtown Kansas City.

As a leader in the church, I love watching what it takes to ignite a city, to build momentum and to gain victory on a worldwide stage. The Kansas City Royals have been hailed as classy, by those near and far and I think the church could learn a lot from this baseball team. They broke a 30 year drought and took the crown, they truly did Make it Reign!

They went back to the way baseball used to be played, as a team sport, and they are the world champions. Finally, they stayed the course, they ran the race and win or lose, and never lost sight of the prize. These are the lessons I learned from the Kansas City Royals that brought out 800,000 people to celebrate their victory!

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