

Parenting Like Holy Nobility

What do you really want to get out of your child's involvement in athletics? Your answer will say a lot about your priorities as a Christian who is also a parent. In all that we do, Christians are admonished to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. *For the sake of the Gospel*, we are to do all to the glory of God and not to offend others. The NCCSA's theme verse, I Corinthians 10:31, is quoted before our tournaments. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or *whatsoever* ye do, do all to the glory of God." The goal of our speech, attitudes, and actions should be to show to others the *Unique Excellency of God* whose grace has purchased us with His Son's blood. We can only gain the true benefit of our theme verse by reading it in the context of our impact upon other people. "Do all to the glory of God" is followed by "*Give none offence*, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I *please all men in all things*, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:30-31

As spectators, we ought to contribute to the game in a manner that demonstrates an understanding that Christ "has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." (Rev.1:6) Our speech, attitudes, and actions should demonstrate the self-control of a kingdom-of-God focus as we obey the commandment to love God with our entire being and our neighbor as we do ourselves.

The following quote was taken from the Cheerleaders' Spirit Rulebook published by **The**

National Federation of State High School Associations (a secular organization):

"Good sportsmanship is conduct which imposes a type of *self-control* involving *honest* rivalry, *courteous* relations, and *gracious* acceptance of results. School spirit is a reflection of these attitudes and behavior. If a school is to succeed in one of its prime functions, that of developing *good citizenship*, it is necessary that student groups radiate proper sportsmanlike conduct. *Sportsmanship is good citizenship in action.*"

For some time now the **North Carolina High School Athletic Association** has been placing a major emphasis on sportsmanship in the public schools. Their points of emphasis include the following: "Every possible step should be taken by administrators and coaches to promote good sportsmanship at every inter-school athletic event.... Every effort should be made to promote a climate of *wholesome competition.*" In their handbook, they provide the following definition: "Sportsmanship is "the quality of *responsible behavior* characterized by a *spirit of generosity* and a *genuine concern* for opponents, officials, and teammates."

The Parents' Pledge

Christian fans would do well to model the following parent's pledge borrowed from the Ohio High School Athletic Association:

"As a parent, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I will remember that school athletics are an extension of the classroom, offering learning experiences for students. I must show respect for all players, coaches, spectators, officials, and support groups. I will participate in cheers that support, encourage, and uplift the teams involved. I understand the spirit of fair play and that good sportsmanship is expected by our school and the NCCSA. I hereby accept my responsibility to be a model of good sportsmanship that comes with being the parent of a student-athlete."

- Remember that you are at a contest to support and yell for your team and to enjoy skill and competition, not to intimidate or ridicule others.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of your school in the eyes of everyone at the event. Appreciate the fact that they are willing to do their job in full view of the public!
- Only use positive cheers in support of your team.
- Remember that interscholastic athletics are learning experiences for students and that people (including you) sometimes make mistakes.
- A ticket to an interscholastic athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others and be generally obnoxious."

For the Christian, sportsmanship is godliness applied to the games of life.

What an opportunity for Christian fans to contribute to the truth that **you can be godly and good at playing games!** What a difference each of us can make if we will practice on game night what is preached on Sunday morning!

Self-control over passions (James 4)

Positive speech, attitudes and actions (Eph.4:29-31)

Objectivity: Even in games, people make mistakes! (Matt. 7:1-5)

Respect for others. (I Cor. 10:32, 33)

Testimony that glorifies God (I Cor. 10:31)

Sensitivity to the feelings of others (Phil. 2:1-16)

On the following page is a challenge that has been given to our NCCSA Coaches. Do all that you can to encourage your coach to live up to the ideals of coaching like holy nobility by applying the same principles to your parenting and cheering.

**Beyond Garland to Gold:
Molding *FINISHERS***

2 Tim. 4:7 "I have fought a good fight, **I have finished my course**, I have kept the faith."

Fair play: I will consistently demonstrate trustworthiness as an ambassador of Christ by promoting the spirit of fair play as I fulfill my responsibilities as a coach. Romans 14:11-19

Integrity: I will be guided by the ethical code of imitating Christ as I adhere to the guidelines of the NCCSA in spirit and in fact. II Timothy 2:3-5

Never-quit attitude: I will press toward God's goal of Christlikeness, no matter what the prospect of personal pain or profit. (Romans 8:28, 29; Hebrews 12:1,2)

Instrument mentality: I will look for opportunities to promote the gospel and growth through my attitude, speech and actions. I Cor. 10:31-33

Self-Control: I will not be impatient, angry or judgmental towards the shortcomings of others involved in the game. Prov.16:32; Matthew 12:36

Hustle: I will pursue personal excellence as unto the Lord in whatever I do. Philippians 3:13, 14

Excellence: I will know and teach the rules, tactics, and techniques of my sport in a commendable manner. Colossians 3:17

Reverence: I will speak and act like holy nobility with the dignity and gratitude befitting a Kingdom-of-God mindset. I Peter 2:9 ; 4:11

Servant leadership: I will seek to demonstrate a me-serve-you and not a you-serve-me approach to my ministry. Philippians 2:4-8

Your **Ministry** as a Christian Spectator in the

North
Carolina
Christian
School
Association

Bob LaTour
NCCSA Athletic Commissioner