

THE KING'S TEAM



Nobody gets to heaven by themselves. Why? Because Christianity is a team sport. We need to be on the King's team, the church. More than that, we need to be doing our part to see that the King's team is a success. Here then is what you need to know about the King's team and your place on it:

1. Every church member is important to the team's success.

(1Pe 1:18-19) = The King purchased you for the team at the incredibly high price of His own blood. What does that mean? Jesus believes you are important to the team's success (e.g. The Browns recent acquisition of Deshaun Watson for a guaranteed \$230m [most guaranteed money in NFL history] = The Browns believe Watson is important to their success). Jesus would not have done given His precious blood for someone He didn't believe could have a major impact for His team. Hence why Peter says (1:13a "prepare your minds for action") = Get ready to make an impact for the team you were purchased at a high price to play for – to show you are worth the price that was paid versus being a bust. Those who are a bust w/ declared apostate and go to hell (Heb 10:29 "profaned the blood" = Wasted the price that was paid [Mat 5:13 – made useless]; Consider also Luk 20:35) .

2. When King Jesus purchased the church, He promised to build a winning team.

(Mat 16:18) = The team Jesus has assembled cannot be defeated by the opposing team ("the gates of hell" [Satan and his evil forces – including this world under his control] cannot "prevail against [us]"). Why? B/C He has empowered us (you and me, the members who collectively make up the church, the King's team) with the keys to heaven's nuclear weapons (v19 "bind" = weapon of eternal damnation; "loose" = weapon of eternal salvation). What does Satan or the world possess that can thwart or stand against those weapons/powers? Nothing. What that means: only the church can beat the church. IOW: We beat ourselves by refusing/failing to do what it takes to win.

3. Winning requires that the church function as a team, and fight for their King.

"Great things are never done by one person, they're done by a team of people." – Steve Jobs

Jesus needed the church to complete His mission on earth. The kingdom our King established, we have been left to grow and defend (Joh 14:12-13 w/Mat 28:18-20 w/Mat 27:11, 29, 37) = BC of Jesus' upgrade to "King of Kings" (or king of everyone versus simply, "king of the Jews"), the church would do the greater (or more expansive) work of advancing the kingdom beyond the borders of Israel. However, for the church to finish what Jesus started, requires we function as a team and fight for our King.

3.1. What it means to function as a team:

3.1.1. We stop acting like fans and get in the game.

(Luk 10:1-2) = Notice, Jesus needed the team to get the win. He needs players who will get in the game and help out ("laborers" not spectators/fans). As stated in the previous point, we are all important to the team's success. But that means getting in the game/getting involved with what our team is currently learning or doing. Even the best player cannot benefit the team if all they do is sit on the sidelines or refuse to learn the plays (e.g. How many of you have taken the time to learn the play assigned last week? How many of you could argue persuasively for Jesus' return in next 25yrs? What about the Marriage Covenant Gospel? How many of you could present and defend it from the Scriptures? How do you expect to make a play if you don't learn the plays and get in the game?). Like Jesus, pastor needs the team to get the win.

3.1.2. We are fully committed to the team in our thinking, our loyalty, and gospel strategy decided by the team's leaders/coaches.

(Phi 2:1-2 "same mind, having the same love, being in full accord") = Fully committed thinking and loyalty to the team; ("and of one mind") = Fully committed to the strategy called by the team's leaders/coaches (See Phi 1:5 w/1:25-27 = I am coming back as coach. Until then, stay committed to the gospel strategy I gave you before ["your partnership in the gospel" w/me]; BTW: strategies change all the time – which means we need to change and fully commit to the new strategy decided by our coaches [versus viewing it as a flaw/failure]- See 2Co 1:12-23; e.g. In the "Man In The Arena" series [ep. 1], former NE Patriot LB Willie McGinest comments on how the team expected Drew Bledsoe to be declared the starter for SB 36 given his experience taking them to a previous SB. Coach Belichick however changed the strategy and decided to go w/the young in experienced QB, Tom Brady. What did the team do? They fully committed themselves to the coach's decision and their new QB. Though hugely disappointed w/coach Belichick's decision at the time, Drew Bledsoe also fully supported his coach, his team and Tom Brady who went on to beat the "greatest show on turf."; Jeff Bezos' view on change/change of strategy, "People who are right a lot listen a lot, and they change their mind a lot.") .

Unfortunately, and embarrassingly, the world is often more committed to their coaches and teams than the church is to theirs (e.g. Judas' betrayal of Jesus: he didn't like the strategy of his coach – Mar 14:3-11 w/Joh 12:1-8; Consider also, this is why we are warned – Heb 12:14-15 “strive for peace” = unity; Act 20:28-30 [“will arise speaking twisted things to draw away the disciples after them” = They will act as though they are/sb captains of the team and attempt to recruit people to their team/strategy]; Rom 16:17-18; Gal 5:26 w/13-15 = The recipe for a church that never gets a win for the King: 1) everybody thinks they know better than everybody else -including their coaches [“conceited”], 2) everybody has a chip on their shoulder so can't get along w/their team-mates [“provoking one another”], 3) everybody is jealous of everybody else so quits all the time [“envying one another”]. IOW: They are a team that bites, devours and consumes one another rather commits to one another in their thinking, loyalty and strategy).

Our coaches/pastors' two-pronged gospel strategy that we as a team need to be committed to:

1) Covenant Life Groups (starting in May), 2) Marriage Covenant Gospel Book (pastor needs team-mates not fans. He needs team-mates to thoughtfully read and provide feedback to make sure the book is the best it can be for our King. IOW: the team working together is how we get the win - e.g. Luke Kuenning's suggestion to add Mat 22:32 as biblical support for my argument from grammar in respect to the Adamic, Noahic and Abrahamic covenants as Marriage Covenants. Luke's contribution may be the difference between someone being convinced or dismissing what is said). What is your commitment to seeing our team's two-pronged strategy successfully executed – whether it be with the community groups or the book? How committed are you to the team?

“The team with the best players committed only to themselves is no match for the team with average players fully committed to their team” - Anonymous

3.1.3. We put the needs of the team above our individual needs.

(Phi 2:3-4; Joh 15:12; Luk 22:28-30) = Those who put the team first – even when things are tough, are those who go to heaven).

“No man is more important than The Team. No coach is more important than The Team. The Team, The Team, The Team.” – Bo Schembechler

3.1.4. We are willing to play whatever role is necessary - and sacrifice whatever is necessary, to guarantee the team's success on the field.

(Phi 2:5-8) = Jesus sacrificed His high position of God to fill the necessary role of an obedient human slave to guarantee His team's success. Paul says we are to follow His example/possess His mindset. B/C Jesus had this mindset, God upgraded His position on the team (vv9-11 = Jesus became the G.O.A.T. King because of His willingness and sacrifice – i.e., because He proved to be the ultimate team-player; Mat 28:18). Everybody wants to be the team's superstar. However, the only way to be the superstar is to be the best, most dedicated team player. The one who makes everyone else on the team look good (not yourself) (Mar 10:43-44). Very few ministries can be given to others in this church, because very few of our members want to do what it takes to be superstars for our King. Very few people are willing to sacrifice to make sure the ministry they are a part of is a success. This doesn't btw require you be a leader, just – once more, a great team-mate or team player. This btw are how leaders get recognized. They are superstar team-mates/team players, people the rest of us can count on to make sure whatever ministry they are a part of, wb a success. People who are not fighting for themselves (i.e. their glory), but the glory of their King.

3.2. What it means to fight for the King = We stop making excuses or settling for mediocracy. Any time Christians make excuses for failure or serve up mediocracy in their service to the King (i.e., anything related to the church or ministry), they are not fighting for the King. Excellence is the only standard acceptable to our King. Hence why Paul prays this way for the Philippians (Phi 1:9-10). Excellence (however) is never an accident. It takes perseverance (i.e., not quitting after two weeks), meticulous planning or preparation, attention to detail, and sweating the small stuff. If you suffer at being excellent, start by asking how much of the activities in your life are planned? Most people plan only one thing: to get to their job (or church on Sunday). Everything after that is just “gas out and pass out”, which means you never have time to be excellent because your time (after work or church) is wasted. The story of your life and what they will write on your tombstone (if you do not change and start fighting for the King): “They played a mediocre game, filled with excuses and failure that accomplished little for the team or your King. There were water-boys better than them.” INSTEAD of THIS: “They fought the good fight for their King. For them, this was life: serve the King, savor His kingdom.”

CLOSING CONTEMPLATION/CHALLENGE = How successful will our Covenant Life Groups be? How successful will the book be? What part will you play to guarantee they are successful? What about the kind of team-mate you are today? What needs to change so you can be the superstar your King deserves?