

**The SEASONS of Life
February 13, 2022
Superbowl Sunday**

Pre-Season

Regular Season

Post-Season

Superbowl Sunday is a phenomenon...it is the most watched program of the year around the world!

- **170 million viewers world-wide**
- **Average ticket price this year is \$10,000!**
- **30 second commercial costs 6.5 million!!**
- **Most of you will be somewhere tonight for the Super Bowl whether you will be *watching* the game or not!**

If you didn't know...the Cincinnati Bengal are playing the Los Angles Rams.

The last time the Bengals were in the Super Bowl was in 1988 when they lost to the San Francisco 49ers (in fact they lost the 1981 Super Bowl to the 49ers as well in the Pontiac Silverdome...good thing it was indoors because the outside temp was -59 windchill. It has since been known as the Freezer Bowl!!)

It's been an up and down season for both teams this year. I don't think either were in the conversation at the beginning of the season to make it to the Super Bowl.

They each had their struggles – but now they are in the big game. One of them will walk away with a trophy that says they are the best in the world. Whoever wins it will be elated! You'll see 300 pound grown men cry when they win it. :)

To most of the players, the money will mean nothing. The endorsements and publicity and all that goes with it means nothing compared to hoisting the Lombardi trophy.

The Bible writers often use Athletic comparisons in relation to our Spiritual journey.

Paul, and the writer of Hebrews speaks of our Spiritual journey as a....RACE, BOXING MATCH, and How Competitors are to Compete.

Paul even alludes to his death as, “having Finished the Course.”

I. Run the Race

A. Not Aimlessly-

- **You'll hear commentators speak of running backs that run east and west, instead of north and south! (Explain)**

1 Cor. 9- Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly

Let me sum up Football for some of you that still don't get it! [Cricket in Trinidad]

Two teams

A ball

The End Zone!!

The AIM is...Get the ball to the end zone!!

And get it there as many times as possible, preferably more than the other team :)

B. Don't RUN the wrong way!! Distraction

The Football Field has also been called “the gridiron” because it is laid out in grids. The field is 100 yards long and is marked off at every yard. There are ten yard markers that run the entire length of the field.

The goal is to push the ball farther down the field and in the process “gain yardage”. You want to make Gains!!

In order to make gains in our spiritual life we have to think very similar to how the players think during a football game.

To gain yardage you can't get distracted.

One of the great stories of football happened on New Years day, 1929 at the Rose Bowl. The teams were Georgia Tech and the University of California. The teams were scoreless in the second quarter when Georgia Tech's John Thomason, nicknamed Stumpy, fumbled and dropped the ball. That's when one of the UC players recovered the ball and began running. But in the confusion of being grabbed at, shoved and tackled, the player, Roy Reigels got turned around and disoriented. That's when it happened.

He started running the wrong way – toward the opposite end of the field and the other teams end zone.

If it had not been for the quick thinking of a teammate who finally caught up with Reigels just yards from making a touchdown for the other team It was one for the ages!!

But from that time on Roy Reigels became know as “Wrong Way Reigels”, a name he never lived down.

Because he became distracted.

1 Timothy 6-

But godliness with contentment is great gain... But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction.

Speaking of Distractions...

Trick Plays cause opponent to lose focus!!

Discipline!! Stay in your lane!!

II. Don't RUN overloaded- players wear different pads

1 Cor. 9- Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

With Perseverance-

Training under a load

- **Weighted golf club**
- **Heavy basketball**
- **Donut on baseball bats**

Perseverance...It's never over till it's over-

The Buffalo Bills are not in the Super Bowl this year because there was 13 seconds on the clock, everyone thought it was over, and then they gave Patrick Mahomes the ball back!!

**Run to win the Prize- raise the Eternal trophy
It will be worth it!!**

III. Boxing...swinging my arms

A. Focus- Hand to eye coordination

Eye on the prize

Phil 3- But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and *straining*...(Focused- Mika drops whatever she has when I get her a treat!) toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

B. Tactful- Coaches make the tough calls

1 Cor. 9- I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”

Vince Lombardi- “Winning is not a sometime thing; it’s an all the time thing. You don’t win once in a while; you don’t do things right once in a while; you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing.

Vince Lombardi said, "The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor." FOCUS

In 1998 Quarterback Tony Rice led Notre Dame’s football team to a national championship. Before the season, sportswriters wondered whether Notre Dame could beat the tough teams with a quarterback like Rice, whose passing often was inaccurate.

They didn’t know that coach Lou Holtz had bought Rice a dart board and told him to practice throwing darts an hour a day. Rice didn’t see how that would help his passing, but he did as his coach said. He was committed and focused. Soon he began to throw passes with more accuracy and confidence--both of which were evidenced in a banner season.

Wax on...Wax off!!

This step is crucial. Without laser point focus and determination, we fracture off into too many areas. We become double-minded.

The book of James tells us that a double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

IV. Play according to the Rules

Honest

Truthful

Obedient

Olympics- Russians are under suspension...and their top figure skater is accused of doping! :(

2 Timothy 2:3-7 Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer.

Similarly, anyone who competes as an athlete does not receive the victor's crown except by competing according to the rules.

Charles Reade, English novelist and dramatist, wrote, "Sow an act, and you reap a habit. Sow a habit, and you reap a character. Sow a character, and you reap a destiny."

BAND

My words to you today is... Play like a Champion!

There are 3 Seasons in Football-

Goal of Pre-Season is to work on fundamentals and get the team to gel. Learn the plays. Get conditioned for the long regular season. [Pre-Christ]

Goal of Regular Season is to win more than you lose and start to peak as the Post-Season approaches. [Salvation...becoming like Christ]

**The Goal of the Post-Season is to play with intensity realizing that every possession counts! The goal is to win the prize!!
[Eternity]**