

God's Team

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I found last Weeks NFC Championship Game Ironic. . . Many of the so called experts picked the Vikings because Favre was unstoppable. Yet, if Favre has one weakness it has always been trying to make things happen on his own! So on third-and-15 from the New Orleans 38, Favre knew the Vikings needed to get closer to give [Ryan Longwell\(notes\)](#) a legitimate shot at a game-winning field goal in the final seconds.

He rolled right and then, instead of scrambling for the yards that might have put Minnesota in field goal range, threw across the field to the left.

[Tracy Porter\(notes\)](#) picked it off to send the game to overtime. In overtime the Super Star simply watched his defense try and stop the saints-In the end it is a reminder one super star can never win a Game-It takes a super team to win championships.

When Jesus started training the seventy two for ministry, he made them a team. Listen. .

.After these things the LORD appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.Luke 10:1-3

Jesus was sending 36 teams of two to reach the multitudes. These teams were not to try to do the job without help; rather, they were to ask God for more workers and others for help.

Some people, as soon as they understand the Good News, want to go to work immediately contacting unsaved people. This story suggests a different approach: Begin by mobilizing people to pray. And before praying for unsaved people, pray that other concerned disciples will join you in reaching out to them.

This is the point of team Sunday-to say-to demonstrate and encourage the team of Elbert Christian Church to reach the lost. The NFC Championship and Jesus reminds us for The Church to reach the lost, Christians must move from standing (or more correctly sitting) committees to moving Teams. Today we must be more concerned about meeting needs than a title we wear. Just like the original teams we work for Jesus, and our mission is to pray for more teams, train more team-workers, and to play well as a team.

Explain: God did not make us to be Lone Rangers!

Americans like to whine and pine for the "good old days" you know when you got to trot to the outhouse when it was below zero. But the picture many TV Shows and Books paint is one individual with a pioneer spirit could carve a home out of the wilderness and create all that was needed for personal survival. There is a whole genre of "G"-type movies and TV shows that orbit about the theme of a "wilderness family." Despite the struggles and hardships of everyday life these hardy pioneers faced, they lived the "good life" - simple, pure and unfettered by the constraints and constructions of civilization. In short they had no pesky neighbors.

In truth, a self-sufficient lifestyle sounds great until a big storm of life knocks, you on your butt.

My grandfather came down with Polio in the 40's about harvest time. If there was only His rugged self to harvest the crop my grandparents would at the least faced financial ruin and could have starved.

Instead a team of neighbors showed up to harvest his corn. Ask Don Cole, Loraine Zion, Frieda Carnahan or Edna Jackson and those older if they did it by themselves or together. My bet is they did it together for the good of all.

The price of civilization is the decision to live in a community with others. Something people talk about around here is the Olker Threshing weekend. Where they journey back to those simpler times to harvest oats. And they called the workers a threshing_____ ? Crew! Another way of saying a team.

As much as it pains me to say, it takes a sophisticated, coordinated dependence upon **Team**work to provide all the diverse goods and services required by a large population. As much as we all like to complain about the dehumanizing, hidebound, regulation-happy ways of large institutions, it is their very existence which has given us a lifestyle filled with conveniences.

That is why I Corinthians 12:6-8 says: *There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷Now to each one the*

manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,

Instead of building up and unifying the Corinthian church, the issue of spiritual gifts was splitting it. Spiritual gifts had become symbols of spiritual power, causing rivalries. Some people thought they were more “spiritual” than others because of their gifts. This was a terrible misuse of spiritual gifts because their purpose is always to help the church function more effectively, not to divide it. We can be divisive if we insist on using our gifts our own way without being sensitive to others. We must never use our gifts as a means of manipulating others or serving our own self-interests. The Corinthians wrongly thought Spiritual Gifts made it possible to go it alone apart from other Christians. Our spiritual gifts do not benefit our self, but the common good of the Kingdom of God. When we act like the Lone Ranger; the common good-is not as good because your common gift is missing.

Talk about Lone Ranger, we think of the Cowboy rugged individualist who could do it himself. Some of that is true, but how many roundups have you been too where one cowboy did it all by himself? It is hard to work alone. Sometimes the line between rugged independence and sheer exhaustion can grow very thin. God never created us to be a Lone Ranger.

If you are not involved, not serving, not attending- you are not

hurting yourself-you are hurting the Body of Christ. Paul said you have gifts and a way of doing things no one else can do-if you're not at the party we all suffer!

Illustrate: the Team Concept is not New!

It is time for us to reread our Bibles. Throughout the Bible, the most successful and obedient models of leadership are found when a dream **Team** of God's faithful men and women undertake a mission together.

- Abraham and Sarah worked as a **Team** to establish a new nation and a new covenant people.
- Moses and Aaron worked as a **Team** to drive Pharaoh to distraction and get the Hebrews out of Egypt.
- Moses and Joshua worked as a **Team** to move a stubborn and stiff-necked people toward their Promised Land.
- Josiah and Hilkiah worked as a **Team** to restore God's law to a forgetful nation.
- Ruth and Naomi worked as a **Team** to find security and a future in the midst of great loss.
- Esther and Mordecai worked as a **Team** to see that the Jews were kept safe and their enemy Haman was destroyed.
- John the Baptist and Jesus worked as a **Team** to bring the Holy Spirit upon the Messiah's ministry.
- The disciples worked as a **Team** as they went out two-by-two to fulfill the mission of the 70.
- Paul and Barnabas worked as a **Team** ... Paul and Silas worked as a **Team**

... Paul and Timothy worked as a **Team** so that the message of salvation continued to be spread even while Paul sat in prison.

Ephesians: 4:11,12 says: It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

If you have your own Bible, circle God's people and Works of Service. So let's ask who is suppose to be building up the Body Christ-Who is to be doing works of service? The Pastor-The Elders? No you are! And if you are not serving you are missing out!

This is where we get confused: we think service has to happen in Church: Wrong! God may have not Have shaped you to be an Elder-but to ride with the Christian Motorcycle Association. Jesus knows if you sing their will be an evacuation from Church-but in your Job-your integrity-your love shows through and people know Jesus because of you! So get off the sideline and get into the Game. That is what team Sunday is all about-maybe you will see something that will help you get into the game.

Demonstrate: A well known football manager once commented in an interview "It's easy to get good players. It's getting them to play together that's the hard part!" A man who couldn't swim went fishing with his friend and after awhile caught a really big fish. He was so excited about catching such a big fish that he leaned too far over and fell into the

water. "Help! Save Me! Help! Save Me!"

His friend reached out and was going to grab him by the hair and get him into the boat. But the man's toupee came off and he slipped back into the water. He came up again and yelled, "Help! Save me!" This time his friend grabbed him by the arm. As he pulled on his arm, it came off because it was an artificial limb. The man continued to kick and thrash around. The friend reached out and managed to grab a leg and as he pulled on it, it came off. It was a wooden leg. As the man continued to splash, calling out for help his friend disgustedly said, "How can I help you if you won't stick together?"

Sometimes God has a difficult time helping us with teamwork because we have a hard time "sticking together" as a team. This why Jesus says; *Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. Matthew 12:25*

Here is the bad news. . . on a basketball team only five get to start and someone's role is to ride the bench for the betterment of the team. We do not always like our gifts or position on the team, we often do not like our teammates, but a team player always puts the purpose of the team a head of his own desires. So when the ball does not bounce how we would like how do we maintain team spirit?

Apply a Team Spirit:

Be devoted to **one another** in brotherly love. Honor **one another** above yourselves. [Romans 12:9-11](#)

3 PRACTICAL STEPS to make Romans 12:9-11 a reality

1.) The team members must Care For One Another.

Uncaring people on a team remind me of two guys in a sinking boat, sitting together at one end doing nothing. As the people at the other end are bailing furiously, one says, 'Thank God that hole isn't in our end of the boat.' Without Sacrifice there can be no Success! Sometimes we are called to sacrifice: time, effort, comfort, own desires for the sake of the team. We should adapt the Musketeer motto 'All for One & One for All!'

2) The team members must Communicate.

In Hurricane Katrina, hundreds died while those who could have rescued them stood by. Why? Communication broke down. It is the same thing today in Haiti, a lack of information keeps aid from getting help to where help is needed.

3) 'Your rights' must take second place.

The team's success must always be of greater value than your own individual interests. Your 'I'll do it myself, that way I know it'll get done right' attitude, robs others of the opportunity to participate, learn and grow, and leaves the job undone or poorly done.

Conclusion: How many people would like to see this church packed every Sunday? People Saved & Equipped to achieve greatness on a regular basis? To see this Church have incredible influence both locally & globally for the glory of God? How many of you dream of living in a peaceful yet purpose community that works together in harmony? How many people would like to enjoy the benefits of a successful & happy family? Enjoy job satisfaction in a work place that is productive frequently getting results?

Well you could see all this & MORE!! But it up to your obedience to God! How involved will you become! Will you say yes? Will you obey to become the common good for the team of the church!