



Ever Play Football or Compete?

If anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. —Timothy 2:15, niv

Are you into competition? My wife is out of control when it comes to football. And this is the week for the Super Bowl, the time that dedicated football fans have been gearing up for all year. It should be lots of fun seeing who'll become the champions.

While you're celebrating the victory of your favorite team (or maybe empathizing with those who'll be defeated), please don't forget to acknowledge the One who attained the ultimate victory—on Calvary's tree—in the most supreme conquest there has ever been. As Christians, that's what we glory in—the cross. It was the definitive open demonstration of God's love for us in all of history!

You know that Christ lived a sinless life and hung on the cross to win! He wasn't defeated though lots of observers thought He was. He died there to address the universal and incurably plaguing problem of our souls: sin. And preceding His death, Jesus Himself, made some [mind-boggling assertions](#). He said, *"The Son of Man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life"* (Jn. 3:14-15). Many have spoken of these words: "Lifted up" in different ways, but correctly they refer to how Jesus was nailed and then elevated on that same wood that He carried to His own crucifixion—yes, to cure the incurable, and to pay the full penalty for all our wrong-doings.

What was the meaning of that historical event? Well, Jesus made it clear for us saying, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"* (Jn. 3:16).

The cross brought victory over slimy sin and that really creepy fallen angel, Satan ...and also victory over disgusting death! Two thousand years ago, the cross delivered the power to bring everlasting life to everyone who repents and starts a relationship with Jesus Christ by faith. This forgiveness and power that Christ offers to you is not earnable though; it's a free gift that you simply receive. It doesn't come by doing good or religious works, but you've got to decide that you want this. God won't force it upon anyone.

A couple weeks ago, I was pricing some tickets to the Super Bowl game. They started out at \$2500 each. They're outrageously expensive here, but I'm sure that scalpers will get even more from people seeking a chance to watch both of the teams really clobber each other up-close and personal for a few

hours. I'm glad that salvation isn't expensive for us; again it's free! It's no game, but you have been invited ..even to be right up-close where the action is!

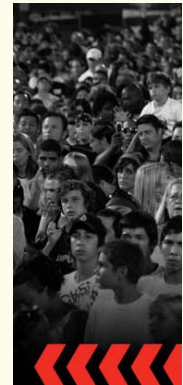
If you haven't already accepted God's invitation to attend His super party—His marriage supper of the Lamb—then there is still some space and some limited time available for you. But remember that Christ is your only ticket to eternal life; your Key to real victory in the greatest contest! Your tickets to the Kingdom of Heaven are waiting for you. All you need to do is go to Him and pick them up. Will you [pick up your ticket today?](#)

Super Bowl competition is way exciting! And competition in general can be such a healthy thing, especially in business or in different sporting events. Of course it can become detrimental, however, when a person fleshes-out. You know what I mean, when their attitudes, actions and emotions become brutally self-serving at another's expense. Such competition should have no place in a marriage or in the church, for it is imperative that Christians [present a good witness worldwide](#) and work together for the advancement of the Gospel! Effective evangelism starts where observers really are ...in relation to God, not where we'd like them to be. And the Lord can use us in wonderful ways when we lay aside our personal differences—when we quit trying to dominate and wrongly compete against each other.

***Lord, help me live from day to day, not in the wrong kind of competitive way,
That even when I kneel I say, Make me self-forgetful as I serve and pray.***

Let's all work together on God's team. Football fans, please do enjoy the ballgame and try not to believe all the beer commercials or eat too many buffalo wings and nachos!

In the Fisher's mighty hand,
Kurt



Have Kurt's fishing devos blessed you? Click on "[Contact](#)" and let him know! Tell him what God has been doing in your life.