

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

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ALL SPORTS ARE NOT BANNED

by

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Some of the youths at the second Camp at Orr, Minnesota may have misunderstood what I said to them about COMPETITION.

Truly, COMPETITION, not cooperation is the attitude Satan innoculates into human minds. But that does NOT mean all sports are wrong or banned in God's Church, College and schools.

The LAW OF GOD is the way of righteousness. Sin is the transgression of the Law. The Law of God is given us in the broadest principle and also magnified into the Ten Commandments, and even into many further specific commands that are merely magnifications of the PRINCIPLES of the Ten Commandments. God expects us--through His Spirit and spiritual UNDERSTANDING--to APPLY these PRINCIPLES of His Law to specific actions.

The basic Law is LOVE, outflowing toward God above all else, and secondarily "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

To HARM the other fellow, and to gain by so doing for SELF, is a kind of competition that is wrong. Hostility toward the other is sin. To get the best of another in a deal for one's own benefit is wrong.

Suppose you are an architect laying out a golf course. The one who wins at golf is not the one who GETS the most by taking it away from the other. In golf the player does not prevent the other from doing his or her best. The architect who designs and lays out the plans for building a golf course is not breaking God's Law when he designs sandtraps, small lakes or pools, or leaves certain trees to HELP the player to increase his skill. These hazards hurt no one, but are an incentive and help, to developing skill.

Two men or women--or several--in a race are not harming the other runners if they run according to the rules. The Apostle Paul uses winning a race as an example of a Christian developing character.

So, golf is not a wrong competition--nor is any race at any distance or hurdle race, or long jump, high jump, pole vault or other field competition in a track and field meet. At Ambassador we have banned the hammer throw because it might endanger others--but not because it is a wrong or unfair competition.

Now take basketball. Guarding on defense is, if within the rules, the same in principle as the sandtrap, clump of trees, or pond on a golf

course. The rules make it a foul if a defensive player prevents a shot by actual body contact or holding. If basketball is played according to the rules IN A RIGHT ATTITUDE, it can be a very invigorating, enjoyable game not violating God's Law. All depends on the ATTITUDE of the players.

In interschool or intercollegiate competition, or the pro game, the ATTITUDE too often is BAD. When it is--when there is a spirit of HOSTILITY toward the other side--then it does break God's Law. Therefore, at Ambassador College and in God's Church, competition against those outside the Church, or intercollegiate competition at Ambassador is BANNED!

Behind my back when I was away from Pasadena all but about 60 days in a year, others without my knowledge or consent got Ambassador into intercollegiate competition. THE RESULTS WERE BAD! That is OFFICIALLY BANNED from now on.

But before that, in intramural games between our own classes, a GOOD SPIRIT was shown, and even an objectionable call by an official was not yelled at or received in hostile attitude.

Boxing is definitely BANNED. God did not design and create the human brain and head to be pummeled and knocked senseless by an antagonist.

Wherever a game in sports involves ANTAGONISTS--in HOSTILE ATTITUDE to harm the other and/or to "GET" from the other--to get the best of the other--then a harmful, Satanic and evil attitude enters in, and the sport is EVIL, not good.

Sometimes there is a fine line between what is within and what is outside God's Law.

Basketball is such a sport. So is football, (American football), but because football is such a violent body contact sport, it TOO OFTEN is played in an ATTITUDE OF HOSTILITY, and is too DANGEROUS and fraught with PHYSICAL INJURY. Therefore it must be BANNED so far as participation by God's Church or people is concerned.

Soccer does not embody the same evils.

Baseball, softball, volleyball, while competitive, do not necessarily involve HOSTILITY, harm to others, or trying to prevent the opponent from doing his best. When played in God's attitude toward others these are acceptable and NOT banned.

The same is true of tennis. In pro tennis, in the past few years, there have been two or three "bad guys" who have brought unsportsmanship onto the courts. But tennis as traditionally played is a clean sport and acceptable.

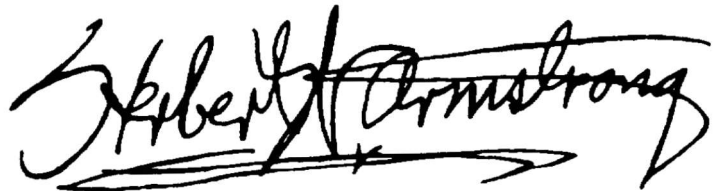
This is sufficient to illustrate the application of the PRINCIPLE of God's Law to sports. That participated in with an attitude of HOSTILITY toward the opponent is evil. That which HARMS mentally or physically an opponent is evil.

Satan is the author of COMPETITION based on hostility, harm to the opponent, GETTING by taking FROM an opponent--to his harm or loss.

God's way is LOVE TOWARD neighbor equal to love of self.

Competition in business which TAKES FROM or HARMS the competitor is evil competition. Competition which HELPS the opponent by stimulating him to do his best or to do better, but does not harm--rather benefits the opponent--is healthy competition. So competition can be EVIL, or GOOD, depending primarily on the attitude in which it is participated.

The very name SATAN means "Adversary." But Satan is an EVIL adversary, who desires to HARM--who has a spirit of HOSTILITY. If it has GOD'S SPIRIT of "GIVE"--help, encourage, co-operate, stimulate for GOOD, based on an attitude of LOVE--it is right, not wrong.



FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Appreciation for Ministerial Refreshing Program

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

My wife and I are very grateful for having been included in this third Ministerial Refreshing Program. After reading the fine comments of those who had taken part in the first two sessions, we came in anticipation and with great expectations. They were more than fulfilled!

We are especially impressed with the dedication, loyalty, and humility of those you have chosen to instruct us. The classes are meaty; leaving us satisfied with practical scriptural guidance for our ministry. Questions to which we had received either conflicting or no answers in the 70s are now being answered forthrightly.

We thank God daily for raising you back up to turn His Church around. Thank you for maintaining an intensive struggle to direct the Church according to God's Word. The good fruit is everywhere evident.

Refreshed aptly terms how we feel through these sessions. We're looking forward to putting it into practice.

Dave and Linda Fiedler

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

Mr. Armstrong, thank you so much for allowing me to attend the second Ministerial Refreshing Program. It was my first opportunity to be on Ambassador Campus as a student.