

# Winning and Losing

Daystar – February 4, 2007  
(*Super Bowl Sunday Night*)

## Introduction:

- A. There are many different measures of winning and losing.
1. Tonight I'm wearing the jersey of last year's NFL Most Valuable Player – Shaun Alexander
  2. Although his team played in the Super Bowl last season, he lost.
  3. A few days after "losing" at football his football team signed him to an 8-yr, \$62 million contract.
  4. Hard to call him a loser isn't it?

Actually, the world's view of winning and losing is a bit out of control. Shaun Alexander isn't a winner b/c he makes \$62 million. He's a winner b/c he loves Jesus Christ with all of his heart. He openly confesses that the most important thing in his life is his relationship with Christ. It is that relationship that makes him reach out to children in a powerful way. As a child he was not able to go to a gym and sports complex near his home in Florence, KY b/c his family was poor. Last year, Alexander bought it and made it a free facility to all kids.

- B. Sadly, when we turn on ESPN this is not the story we often hear.
1. It's usually about some superstar committing a crime and getting off with light (if any) penalties.
  2. The sports world just goes on calling them winners.
- C. Conclusion? The world's view of what is important is often vastly different from God's.

1. Tonight someone will win and someone will lose.
  2. The sports world will act as if it were the most important event in the world.
- D. But every day people are losing things much more important than a ball game.
1. They are losing the very blessings God wants them to have.
  2. It's been going on since the beginning of time.

## **I. Samson lost the Presence of God.**

*Judg 16:20 NKJV*

*20 And (Delilah) said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" So he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.*

- A. Samson experienced a powerful call into the ministry.
1. Over & over we read the same statement made of Samson, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily."
  2. Many, many times God used Samson for His work.
- B. But other things became more important to Samson.
1. His relationships changed – situation ethics.
  2. He used God's power for his own benefit.
- C. Now, not only is he separated from God, but he doesn't even recognize it until it is too late.
1. This is what happens to many people in the church.
  2. They begin to change their lifestyle.
  3. Everything seems to be okay...then...

## **II. David Lost the Joy of His Salvation.**

*Psalm 51:12*

*“Restore unto me the joy of thy Salvation”*

- A. Never has there been a greater demonstration of joy than when David saw God’s presence return to Jerusalem (Ark).
  - 1. In that moment nothing was more important than God’s presence.
  - 2. The JOY of the Lord was David’s STRENGTH.
- B. Somewhere along the way, other things became more important to David.
  - 1. I’ve seen the same pattern over and over again.
  - 2. For David, the result was adultery and murder.
- C. The end result is always the same – No joy...no strength.

## **III. Peter Lost his Boldness.**

- A. 2,000 years ago those words would have seemed ridiculous.
  - 1. Peter...lose his boldness???
  - 2. This is they guy who walked on water, cut off a guard’s ear, spoke up when everyone else was silent...

*Luke 22:55-57 NIV*

*55 But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. 56 A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him." 57 But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said.*

- B. Peter’s pattern is not that different from the rest.

1. He boasted in pride (*I will never...*).
2. He followed at a distance – no longer in the middle of all that Christ was doing – DANGEROUS!!!
3. He sat with the wrong associates.
4. He lost his courage!

C. These all and many today are summed up in this next story...

#### **IV. The Ephesians Lost the First Love.**

A. When Paul described this wonderful group of believers, they sound like awesome people of faith.

*Eph 1:3-14*

*Blessed ... chosen ... predestined to the adoption of Christ ... accepted ... redeemed ... had a revelation ... inheritance ... sealed with the Holy Spirit...*

B. Just before judgment is passed on them by John...

*Rev 2*

*I know your works... you labor... patience... don't bear evil... try false prophets...*

C. But listen to the bottom line:

*Rev 2:4 NKJV*

*4 Nevertheless I have this (one thing) against you, that you have left your first love.*

#### **Conclusion:**

- A. What motivates you? What is your FIRST love?
1. What do you love above all other things?

## 2. Family? Job? Children? Money? Career?

*Deut 4:23-24 NIV*

*23 Be careful not to forget the covenant of the LORD your God that he made with you... 24 For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.*

B. Putting God first in your life will bless every other love of your life.

*Matt 6:28-34 NIV*

*28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

### **C. Committed leaders of Daystar Church.**

1. I love you so much.
2. You are the heart and soul of this ministry.
3. YOU ARE MY FAMILY!!!

D. I want you to WIN at what counts.

1. Promotions at work, vacations, kids' athletics...
2. Those are all just icing on the cake...
3. And God will give them too.

E. But don't leave your first love.

1. Don't lose your joy & strength.
2. Don't lose God's presence in your life.