

Saturday, March 6, 2010

God's Love and Football

John 3:16 *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.*

John 3:16 is likely one of the most widely-known verses in the Bible. One of the associations that I have with this verse is the memory of growing up and watching Sunday NFL games on TV. It seemed like every time that a team kicked the extra point, the camera would show the ball sailing through the uprights and right there in the middle of the uprights was someone holding a sign. Sometimes the sign said John 3:16, but other times it simply showed the numbers 3:16. Apparently, it had become obvious what those numbers represented. It didn't really matter what teams were playing, you could count on those numbers being displayed prominently in the end zone where it was beamed to the rest of the world through TV. I have no idea who took that first sign to the game, but it became standard practice to see it.

I don't know when displaying this sign stopped being common practice, but over the years I guess that it just did. I can't really remember the last time that God got some free airtime in the end zone. That is until Tim Tebow, the Heisman trophy winning quarterback at the University of Florida, began displaying Bible verses written on the eye black commonly worn by football players. The young star seized his opportunity to display something a lot more meaningful than the area codes that most young players write below their eyes. The Bible verses that he displayed regularly generated millions of hits on Google as interested viewers searched to see what those numbers represented.



I was so impressed that such a young person both saw such an obvious opportunity and had the courage to display those verses so prominently. I am sure that somewhere the first person that took the John 3:16 sign to an NFL stadium is smiling, and I believe that God is pleased. I pray that I am smart enough to recognize my opportunity and courageous enough to use it to tell everyone how much God loves us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for the love that You have showed us by sending Jesus as our Redeemer. We pray that You will give us the courage and wisdom to use the opportunities that You give us to tell others of this wonderful gift. In Jesus Christ's Name we pray. Amen.

--Brent Gloy