

Monday, 19 July 2021 – Weekly Inspiration from Rev. Jason

It makes sense, when watching professional sports, that there should be a winner and a loser. The first driver to 500 laps gets the checkered flag. The team with the greater score at the completion of time gets the "W". And all too often it becomes easy to define our favorite team(s) by their win/loss record - a simple metric with little room for interpretation. For instance, the Nationals have not recently had a very good win/loss record (though we did manage to win over the Padres last night!).

I've recently been rewatching Ted Lasso, a show about an American college football coach who goes over to England to coach a professional European football (soccer) team. He understands very little of the dynamics of soccer. And in an interview with an exasperated reporter, he claims that he doesn't care a whole lot about the wins & losses - an odd thing for a professional coach to claim. Later, he goes on to qualify that statement. "For me," he says, "it's about helping these young fellas be the best versions of themselves, on and off the field" (season 1, episode 3).

Granted, this is a fictional show, and a fictional coach. But for Coach Lasso, it's more important to develop the players into people who will benefit and increase the world around them. And if it helps the team in the process, so much the better. Much the same could be said for as Christ-followers. In the concluding sentences to the his letter to the Hebrews, the author exhorts, "Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews [13:20-21](#), NRSV).

We are not developing and growing as Christians, increasing in the Spirit, simply to gain status or increase our church...God's desire is bigger than that. God wants us to be complete so that we may more fully do God's will, and live out God's Kingdom. If the church grows in the process, so much the better. But the stakes are higher than that, and this is no idle game we are playing. It is, though, a joyful work.

Prayer: Lord, may I increase in you, so that your will and your kingdom may increase in this world. For your glory alone. Amen.