

FATHER AT THE GAME

ACTS 4:32-35

Some years ago, Columbia University had a great football coach by the name of Lou Little. One day Lou had a boy try out for the varsity team who wasn't really very good. But Lou noticed that there was something unique about him—while he wasn't nearly good enough to make the team, he had such irrepressible spirit and contagious enthusiasm that Lou thought this boy would be a great inspiration on the bench. He'll never be able to play, but I'll leave him on the team to encourage the others.

As the season went on, Lou began to develop a tremendous admiration and love for this boy. One of the things that especially impressed him was the manner with which the boy obviously cared for his father. Whenever the father would come for a visit to the campus the boy and his father would always be seen walking together, arm in arm, an obvious indication of an exceptional bond of love between them. They could always be seen on Sunday going to and from the university chapel. It was obvious that theirs was a deep and mutually shared Christian faith. Then, one day, a telephone call came to Coach Little. He was informed that the boy's father had just died—would he be the one to tell the boy? With a heavy heart Lou informed the boy of his father's death, and he immediately left to go home for the funeral.

A few days later the boy returned to the campus, only two days before the biggest game of the season. Lou went to him and said, "Is there anything I can do for you? Anything at all?" And to the coach's astonishment the boy said, "Let me start the game on Saturday!" Lou was taken aback. He thought, I can't let him start, he's not good enough. But he remembered his promise to help and said, "All right, you can start the game," but he thought to himself, I'll leave him in for a few plays and then take him out. The day of the big game arrived. To everyone's surprise the coach started this boy who had never played in a game all season. But imagine even the coach's surprise when, on the very first play from scrimmage, that boy was the one who single-handedly made a tackle that threw the opposing team for a loss. The boy went on to play inspired football play after play. In fact, he played so exceptionally that Lou left him in for the entire game; the boy led his team to victory, and he was voted the outstanding player of the game.

When the game was finally over Lou approached the boy and said, "Son, what got into you today?" And the boy replied, "You remember when my father would visit me here at school and we would spend a lot of time together walking arm in arm around the campus? My father and I shared a secret that nobody around here knew anything about. You see, my father was blind—and today was the first time he ever saw me play!"

It is because of resurrection vision that we are able to "play above our heads" in the game of life and "see" the purposes and power and love of God. May we let the power of God flow through us each day to make a difference in the world around us.

God bless,

Pastor Barbara