

PERSONAL FROM



An Overview from Higher Up

RIGHT NOW the world has its mind focused on the Olympic Games. Suppose we take an overview of Olympic history, down to its present nationalism, as seen from higher up—from the vantage point of the Almighty Creator—and understand what God thinks of this spectacular pageant, and of sports in general.

Let's view the whole thing from the higher-up "camera-setting."

Bear in mind, first, that the government of God had once been administered earthwide. The first human, Adam, had the opportunity to accept for himself, and to administer, that divine government worldwide. But he rebelled and rejected the principle of outflowing love, turning, instead, to the principle of "get" instead of the outgoing "give" principle.

Few know Adam accepted the philosophic way of Satan—self-centeredness, exemplified by vanity, lust and greed, jealousy and envy, competition, rebellion and destruction.

Few know that God then barred mankind, until Christ, from his Holy Spirit—which is the attitude of God-centeredness, of "give," serve, cooperate, share. This world has been based ever since on the "get" or competitive philosophy.

Few know that in barring humanity from God's

Spirit, the Creator of all said, in effect, "Go form your own governments, develop your own way of life, based on your competitive principle."

So nations are competitive. Society is competitive. Sports are competitive.

As God Almighty looks down upon this world, he sees the governments of man and society's sports following the self-centered competitive principle. See this Olympic situation *as God sees it!*

All Sports Not Wrong

Competition, not cooperation, is the attitude with which Satan inoculates human minds. But that does not mean all sports are wrong or to be banned.

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 points that are magnifications of the principles of the Ten Commandments. God expects us to apply



Dwight Stones, Olympic bronze medalist, greets Herbert Armstrong. In background, personal coach Harry Sneider, nominated Olympic coach for track and field.

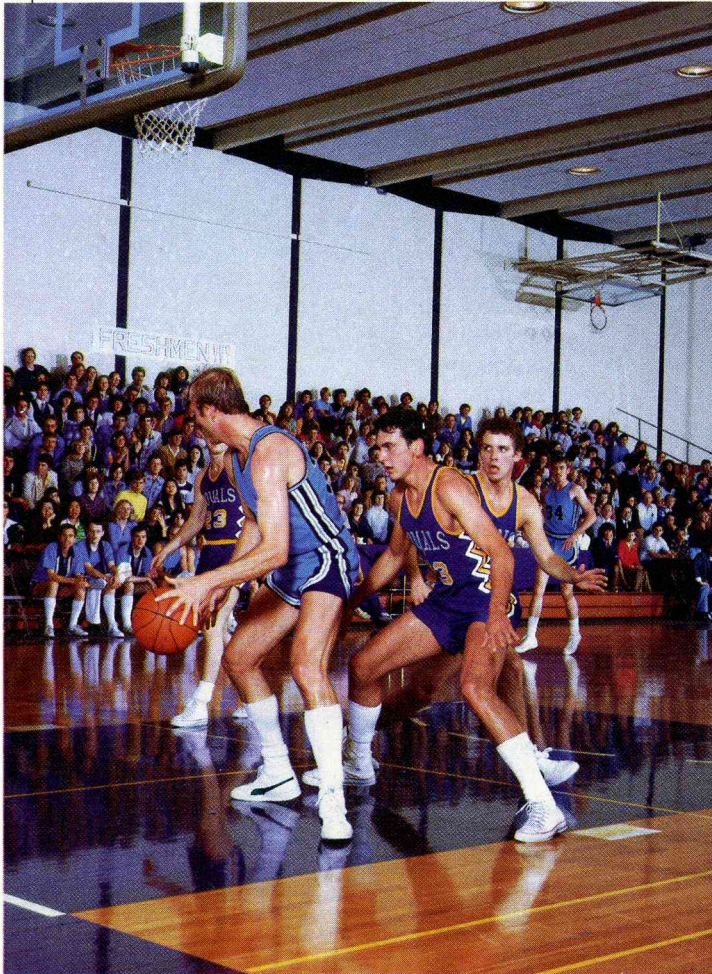
these principles of his law to specific actions.

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.

At golf the one who wins is not the one who gets



Intramural basketball, Ambassador College. Team cooperation, quick judgment and a right attitude are emphasized.

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 sand traps, 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 develop skill.

Two men or women—or several—in a race are not harming the other runners if they run according to the rules.

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 College, with campuses in Pasadena, California, and Big Sandy, Texas, we have not included the hammer throw because it might endanger others—but not because it is unfair competition.

Now take basketball. Guarding on defense is, *if* within the rules, the same in principle as the sand trap, clump of trees or pond on a golf course. The rules make it a foul if a defensive player prevents a shot by actual bodily 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 intercollegiate competition is prohibited.

But intramural games between our own classes occur.

Boxing at Ambassador College 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.

Football (American football) is a violent body-contact sport. It too often is played in an attitude of hostility and is dangerous and fraught with physical injury. Therefore it is not played, but we do play American flag football at Ambassador.

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 prohibited.

This is sufficient to illustrate the application of the principle of God's law to sports. That sport 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 that takes from or harms the competitor is evil competition. Competition that 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.” 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, cooperate, stimulate for good, based on an attitude of love—it is right, not wrong.* □