

It's Super Bowl Sunday and fans go wild. Take a look at pictures of some of the crazy Patriot and Ram fans. If you watch the game, I'm sure you'll see some crazy fans like these guys. The Super Bowl is the biggest annual sporting event in the United States. It's estimated that 75% of Americans will watch the game spending almost \$15 billion dollars. The cheapest ticket in the nose bleed section cost over \$2,700 and a thirty second add ranges between \$5.1 and \$5.3 million. Of course fans want to see their team win.

NFL teams have been huddling up since that start of the season. Jesus was part of a Holy Huddle every Sabbath while he was in Capernaum. The people huddled together to worship the Lord. Our worship service grew out of the Jewish Synagogue service with praising God, praying to God, listening and reflection on God's Word and leaving with a blessing.

Once in the middle of the worship service chaos broke out when a man possessed by a demon began shouting, *"Why are you interfering with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?"* (vs. 34 NLT) This was a challenge to Jesus from his greatest enemy. The stakes were higher that day than they will be during the game tonight. Would the demonic spirit take control of the Synagogue service or would Jesus take control of the evil spirit?

It didn't take long to find out. When Jesus said, *"Be quiet! Come out of the man,"* the demonic spirit left the man. This was the first time the Gospel report Jesus driving out a demonic spirit, His first exorcism. It hadn't been very long since Jesus had been baptized and then tempted in the wilderness. After that the people in his home town tried to kill him. Then he was confronted by the man with a demonic spirit in Capernaum.

Jesus gave the demonic spirit two commands. First he said "Be Quiet" and silenced the evil spirit. The spirit had no choice but to listen to the authoritative voice of Jesus. Then the evil spirit had to obey Jesus' command and come out of the man. We need to listen to these words from Jesus too when our lives become chaotic. We need to learn to be quiet so that we can hear God's voice. God tells us in Psalm 46:10, *"Be still, and know that I am God!"*

When the prophet Elijah was on the run from Queen Jezebel, God told him to stand on the side of a mountain and listen. First there was a windstorm, but no sound from God. Then there was an earthquake, but God didn't say anything. That was followed by a firestorm, but no voice from God. Finally when it got completely silent and God spoke to Elijah in a gentle whisper.

It may not be easy when our lives are chaotic and everything seems to be spinning out of control, but those are the times that we need to be still and listen for God. We can't hear God's voice very well when our lives are full of noise and confusion. Even Jesus took the time to get away from the crowd so that he could have some quiet time with God the Father. We need to follow His example and do the same thing.

When we are really listening to the Lord, we can hear Him tells about the things that we have to let go of, get rid of, break free from. Jesus tells us that we can't have to masters, two different things trying to control our lives. Jesus has the power to give us victory over the things that would control us and pull us away from Him. When there are different things pulling us in opposite directions, something has to give. Remember, the demon possessed man was in the Synagogue before Jesus commanded the evil spirit to leave him. He was being pulled two ways at the same time. The Lord wants to remove the harmful and destructive forces in our lives.

Tony Dungy, the winning coach in the 2007 Super Bowl, has written a new book entitled "*The Soul of a Team.*" Dungy talks about the need for a winning team, for a family and for a church family to have SOUL. The word SOUL stands for four specific things.

1. S is for Selflessness. That means putting our individual needs aside for the good of the team, our families or our church families. Jesus acted selflessly by serving others and by giving up His life on the cross to forgive us. When we only think about ourselves, what we want or what we can get out of being part of something, we are headed for failure. Being part of a church family is not about getting what we want. It is about being part of the family and using the time, abilities and resources God gives us for the good of all.
2. O is for Ownership. This doesn't mean that we own everything or that everything belongs to us. It means finding and fulfilling the role we have by learning how to do what God calls us to do and by giving it our best. Ownership means living up to our commitments and responsibilities. It means not just signing up for something, but also following through. It means being that person others can count on. Jesus owned his role as the promise Savior.
3. U is for Unity. Unity isn't uniformity. We are not all alike and never should try to be alike. God makes each of us unique people with special gifts and abilities. God also unites us in the family of faith. Unity calls for us to understand the mission God has given us and to rally around the vision for making that mission a reality. Even though we are different people, we are one, united, in Christ.
4. L is for a Larger Purpose. The moment we think the church revolves around us, we are headed for trouble. We need to work together to contribute to the community around us in significant and lasting way. That means we have to get to know and interact with the people around us. Jesus tells us, "*Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.*" (Matthew 5:16 NLT)

When we are quiet so that we can listen when the Lord speaks; when we let Jesus remove destructive things from our lives; when we are souled out to God's team we will be like the people in Capernaum. We will be amazed at all that Jesus can do because we know that He has already won the ultimate victory. We are more than conquerors in Jesus who loves us. (Romans 8:37)