



Monday Matters

March 24, 2014

March Madness

It's that time of year again where the center of sports-minded individuals turns to basketball. The brackets have been set, teams are already competing, and every one of these teams wants to get to the Final Four and win the championship.

Most everyone that has ever bounced a basketball has their favorite team. Many have dreamed of even playing in the championship game. But few have done it. For those that played in college, the center of their lives was basketball. For the vast majority, nothing else mattered.

Jared Swopshire was a 6 foot 8 inch tall player who was ranked in the top 100 high school basketball players in the nation. Many colleges wanted his talents on their team. He chose Louisville. He started off his college career extremely well until he suffered an injury.

Ruth Schenk of the Southeast Outlook recently wrote an article about Swopshire and quoted him as saying, "Basketball was what made me get up every day and motivated me. When that was taken away, I hit rock bottom. I began searching for something to fill that void, and I had to figure out who I was beyond basketball."



What had been the center of his life was now empty. He began attending Fellowship of Christian Athletes at school. He learned about joy in the midst of suffering. He began reading the Bible for the first time ever. Not long afterwards he was convicted by things in his life and where his life was going. He repented and put his trust in Jesus. He said, "My views on basketball and life changed."

After suffering yet another injury and couldn't play anymore, he realized the blessing in being sidelined. He gave his attention to school, the ministry of Athletes in Action and his wife. He received his degree in sports administration. But he wanted more. He said, "I really wanted to pour into kids, build relationships and point them to Jesus."

Today Jared Swopshire is the athletic scheduling coordinator for Christian Academy of Indiana and also coaches. The coaches at this school not only teach athletics, but teach the truth about Christ and how to follow Him completely. No longer is basketball the center of his life; Jesus is.

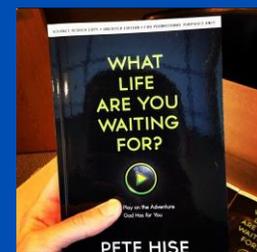
Wouldn't it be great if each one of us made Jesus the center of our lives? What would happen if we spent as much energy into following Jesus as we do following a college basketball team through March Madness?



RN

The Nelsons in Alaska

Anthony, Kristin and children are in Bethel, Alaska, establishing the Bethel Dream Center to reach out to the 57 villages in this area of Alaska to minister to the native population that has not received the Gospel message. Click on the image to learn more about this fantastic ministry.



Don't forget about a book by Pete Hise coming out soon. It is full of accounts of what God can do to and for people who are willing to allow Him to become the focus of their story. *It is entitled: What Life Are You Waiting For?* Click on the image to the right to learn more.



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