

YOUR LIFE IN THE **RED ZONE**

FAMILY – YOUR TEAMMATES

REPLAY

No player plays alone. On the field, there are 10 guys beside you on the line of scrimmage. On the bench are many more men dressed in the same colors as you are. Some will have better games than others, but the running back can't carry the game on his own. The quarterback can't do his job and be a wide receiver at the same time. The defensive tackle can't kick. Together you are a team. As a unit, you win or lose. That's the definition of team, and no, there is no "I" in team.

GAME BOOK

You have a team, too. They are your family. Just like the football players need one another to turn defeat into victory, you need your family to turn life's defeats into victory. You support one another. When your daughter finds out her boyfriend is a jerk, you can give her a shoulder to cry on (you might prefer to break the jerk's leg, but the shoulder wins in the long run). When your son doesn't make the baseball team, you can go to the yard and play catch with him (he can try again next time if he wants).

Most importantly, you can be the team mate your wife needs. And you need her too. You two are the captains that hold the team together. God is your head coach, and your pastor is your offensive coordinator, but you two are on the field leading the team in the day-to-day downs. In Genesis 2, the first man and woman are brought together by God to start a family. From then on, the family is meant to be two parents, a man and a woman, raising children together (Ecclesiastes 4:11). Anytime that this pattern is broken, such as a man taking two wives, bad things happen. David lost peace in his kingdom because of multiple wives (Absalom killed Amnon (2 Samuel 13:28,29) for raping Tamar, Amnon's half sister; things got worse afterwards). The two wives of Jacob (plus two concubines) were always competing with one another (Genesis 30:14-16). Last but not least, Solomon took countless wives and concubines, and his time as king saw Israel's decline from power as he followed the gods his wives worshipped (1 Kings 11:3-13).

Thankfully, you don't have to worry about having multiple wives at once in our society. However, you still need to make the most of your wife. By that, I don't mean use her as an object, but build her up. A man who builds up his wife rewards himself greatly (Proverbs 31:28-31).

In the New Testament, Paul writes that couples are to love and respect one another (Ephesians 5:33). He doesn't stop with the attitudes of a husband and

wife, though. Ephesians also tells us that a man should lovingly raise up his children in the disciplines of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). We are to encourage our children in their godly pursuits. This command is an application of Proverbs 22:6, "train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

TAKE-AWAY

Your family will win or lose the same games you do. No matter what, you need to support each other. This isn't meant to discourage you but to motivate you. Together, you can all be winners. When the opposing team lines up across from your line, together all of you can let them have it. You won't all do the same job, but each position is important to winning the game.