

## Are You Really Interested?

Through the years of coaching my kids in Little League Baseball, I have seen many kids who just seemed to thrive on the game and others who seem to care less if they are even on the field. Some kids play in the dirt or pick flowers during the game. Some kids even request to be placed on the bench. It becomes apparent that they are not there due to any self interest but because their parents want them to be. Many Christians are like the kid who desires to be on the bench; they are, to one extent or another, forced to be at services yet they have no real interest in the things of God. Beloved reader, please know that heaven will be a place for those who truly desire the things of God.

### The parable of the Sower

Jesus told the parable of the sower to make a clear distinction between those who had true desire for God and those who do not. Jesus told His disciples that they were blessed due to having the same “*desire*” that the prophets of old had regarding spiritual salvation (Matt. 13:16). Without desire where will the exerted effort be? The kid who refuses to work on his baseball skills due to a lack of interest will eventually fade away from the team.

### The need for training

The athlete who has no work ethic lacks discipline. More importantly, such a one truly illustrates their lack of interest. Paul used the illustration of an athlete who trains his body saying, “*and every man that strives in the games exerciseth self-control in all things...*” (I Cor. 9:25). The word “strives” indicates a struggle to achieve. There is an exerted effort which is the exact meaning of the word “*diligence*” as used in Hebrews 4:11 and II Timothy 2:15. The author of Hebrews said, “*But solid food is for full-grown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil*” (Heb. 5:14). Man’s “senses” are his intellect, a faculty of our being that must be “*exercised*” (trained and practiced [LS 170]). When we find a man who is knowledgeable of God’s word we find an interested man who has trained his mind through rigorous hours of study! When we find an elderly Christian that is ignorant of God’s word it is evident that there was never any interest and thereby little if any training of the mind in spiritual things. The Bible refers to such a one is a child in the faith.

### Why train?

Why not sit on the bench and let others do all the studying? Peter had said, “*as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation*” (I Pet. 2:2). The illustration is one of physical and spiritual growth. If a child is not nourished his physical body will not develop properly and will eventually die. Likewise, when a Christian does not grow spiritually he shall eventually die spiritually. The apostle Paul said, “*When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things*” (I Cor. 13:11). The Christian who remains a child in faith is doomed. Again, Paul told the Ephesians that they were to grow into adulthood

in their knowledge of the Son of God, *“that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error...”* (Eph. 4:13-15).

### **Are you really interested?**

The fact of the matter is that the bench warmer will not make it to heaven. The reason he will not make it to heaven is because he has no true desire for the things of God. No desire results in no training of the mind. No training of the mind equates to being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. Be honest with yourself, are you really interested?