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*Guest post by Tommy Lunceford*

What is sportsmanship?

When it comes to sportsmanship, what is the responsibility of the coach?

The longer I am around sports the more I realize that asking for someone’s definition of sportsmanship is simply asking for someone’s opinion.  Everyone has one but that doesn’t necessarily mean that their opinion is what we should do.

See if these responses sound vaguely familiar:

* “I’m just competitive…”
* “Jesus got angry in the Temple, so why can’t I?”
* “I am just protecting my players…”
* “I am only mad because the officials don’t know the rules…”
* Sometimes I even hear a little Flip Wilson clip “the devil made me do it.”

There is an old saying that comes to my mind when I hear these responses: “What’s down in the well comes up in the bucket!”

Let’s look to scripture

But let’s not be guilty of letting an old saying guide us. Let’s read a few verses of scripture:

“…For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man out of his good treasure brings forth what is good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth what is evil. And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned.” (Matthew 12:34b-37)

The Apostle Paul also gives us some instructions in Ephesians 4:29: “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

**What we say, how we say it, and when we say it ALL reflect on who we are**. As a Christian Coach, I believe, our number one responsibility is to “**BE**”.

Be a Christian. Be someone who puts their faith into practice. Be someone who exhibits good positive sportsmanship because everyone is watching!