

WINNING BEAUTIFULLY

by Dave Rhodes

Far too often the Christian life of one person happens independently of the Christian pursuit of others. We seek our own dreams or and try to live out God's will for our lives on our own. We try to become who God has called us to be, but we do so at the expense of keeping others from being who God has called them to be. As a result, the Christian pursuit of significance degenerates and looks a lot like the world's pursuit of success. When it does, the individuality and independence on our "team" creates a losing culture.

How we play our role in the kingdom is just as important as what role we are called to play. How we develop into who God has called us to be is just as important as what God has called us to do. Therefore, our road to faith must look different than the world's journey to fame. We must change in a way that helps change everything.

What Brazil Knows that We Don't

One of my favorite sporting events to watch happens every four years and is called the World Cup. The world basically stops to watch this global competition between countries in the game of soccer (or football or futbol, depending on where in the world you are). This is one of the most watched sporting events of the year, outperforming the Super Bowl, the World Series, the NBA Finals, and any other event the U.S. has to offer. The World Cup is popular because so much national pride hangs in the balance.

In World Cup competition, Brazil has succeeded more than any other country. That's no surprise, because in Brazil, soccer is more than a sport. It is a way of life. Every four years, the World Cup is Brazil's opportunity to demonstrate why it is home to the best soccer in the world.

Brazil's goal on the soccer pitch is more than winning. The scoreboard determines only half the battle. Truth be told, Brazilians don't only expect their team to win; they assume victory will happen. Because of this assumption, how team Brazil plays is just as important to the country as whether it wins. In Brazil, the goal is to win beautifully. In other words, the style they win with is just as important as the win itself.

Some experts have criticized Brazil for this aim. Some think Brazil would be even more dominant if it weren't as committed to style. And truthfully, the experts are probably right. Playing beautifully has kept Brazil from winning some games that they could have won. But the Brazilians know that when they win beautifully, they change everything. When they win beautifully, the Brazilians don't only bring home a trophy – they leave a legacy.

I think true disciples of Christ understand about life what Brazil understands about soccer. We are playing our role, and we are playing to win. But representing Jesus requires more. We must win beautifully. The style we play with is as important as the outcome we hope to produce. The way of Jesus is just as important as the work of Jesus. The goodness we win with is as important as the goodness we create.

As we win beautifully, we not only change our lives; we also play in a way that can change the world. This means going beyond gaining crowns with our life so that our lives have credence and credibility. This does at times increase our chances of losing. But as Christians, we know that even our losing, if done with grace, is really a chance for resurrection to have the final and greatest say.



Excerpted from Redefining Normal: An Open Invitation for Ordinary People to Become Extraordinary Disciples by Dave Rhodes. Visit www.wayfarer.tv for more information on Redefining Normal.

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