



Grand Champions

Teen Wranglers

- If Only I had a Better Horse!
- Against all Odds!
- Buckles, Jackpots, and Payouts
- This Judge Ain't Fair



Grand Champions Series/If Only I Had a Better Horse
Ron Singleterry
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Philippians 3:14

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Lesson One: **If Only I had a Better Horse** Teen Wranglers

Illustration:

Arena: Bring a horse into the arena or round-pen. Sitting in the saddle give him voice commands only; in English and then in Spanish or any other language for example, being careful not to use any movements or body language to prod him. When he does not respond, look over at the group and say: **If Only I had a better Horse!**

In a classroom: Explain the scenario above. Tell the students that your horse is just not responding to voice commands and especially not to those you give him in Chinese, for example.

References: Psalm 23:2-3; 25:5; Hebrews 11: 33-40; 12:1; Philippians 3:14; Gen 3:12

If Only

If only I had a better horse then_____. Just fill in the blank.

- I could win something.
- I could be a Grand Champion.
- I could make some money!
- And if I could just get him to “trailer up.”

You know some folks just are always finding the excuse for why things don’t work out for them.

Some folks are always blaming someone or something else for why things don’t work out better for them.

It’s kind of like in one of the Star Wars movies when Hans Solo’s Space Ship the Millennium Falcon keeps stalling out instead of going into Warp Drive; Hans says: It’s not my fault! It’s not my fault! Some folks just have all kinds of excuses about everything that does not go just right.

You remember the Bible story of Adam and Eve. Eve eats the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden; Adam comes along and eats the same fruit. God comes and asks Adam what's happened here? Adam says:

Genesis 3:12

And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

Adam is saying: It's not my fault! It's really your fault God because you gave me this Woman and she made me do it.

People are always finding excuses and passing along the fault to someone or something else.

Who Needs the Training?

We watched a documentary awhile back about a fellow that is a horse whisperer. People call for him to go across the country to hold horse clinics. He takes "so called" non-trainable horses and in minutes these horses respond to him and come under control. It is an amazing thing to watch.

He said that he does not see all that many people that have horse problems. What he does see however are horses that have people problems.

He says the people bring their mishandling techniques and their personal problems to the horses; not the other way around.

He says you have to think like the horse. The horse is scared of everything and you have to show him to not be afraid.

So who needs training? Does the Horse or the Rider need more training according to this man? This fellow would say the Rider does. You can argue with him all day long. But he is the one getting results and FAST results at that!

Psalms 23:2-3

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Psalms 25:5

Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

Right there seems to be the issue. We want to do the leading, instead of letting the Lord do the leading.

That Better Horse

Philippians 3:14

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While I would have to agree that genetics and breeding have a lot to do with a good horse and the capabilities that the horse are bred for, I would also have to say that a good horse left to himself without training would not be able to be ridden into an arena and win the first go.

You most likely wouldn't even be able to get him in the trailer, much less get a saddle on him if you took him straight out of the pasture.

Do you think the horse and rider win the prize because they are just "born to win?"

Do you think the horse and rider win because the horse has spent all of his time in the pasture running free while the rider spent all of his time with his eyes glued to an IPAD?

Do you think the horse and rider win because God loves them more than He loves other people and their horses?

Do you think it is possible that the horse and rider win because they have WANTED to win, and so have spent many many many hours learning the right techniques, and practiced a LOT?

Now we are talking about what set them apart from all of the rest who say they want to be a Grand Champion.

Summary:

Hebrews 11: 33-40 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.

Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

This scripture tells us about faith filled Christians that have lived before us. They did not have an easy life; instead many gave up their lives because they stood for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This scripture explains that many did not live to see their dreams and promises from God happen in their lifetimes! But rather many of them saw these promises from God accomplished after they had gone to heaven. Here's the very next verse.

Hebrews 12:1

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

It is time to stop blaming our failure to live a godly life on our circumstances. It is time to take a stand for what is right in our own life. You are responsible for YOU.



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Lesson Two: **Against all Odds** Teen Lesson

Illustration:

Set up a Dummy Roping Steer. Throw several loops; make sure you miss about half of them [on purpose]. Ask the group if they think you are ready to take Vegas next year? Ask if you have a chance? Ask if you are likely to win? Ask if it is impossible?

References: Matthew 14:31; 21:21; 28:17; I Peter 2:9; Luke 1:37

Not a Chance!

He doesn't have a chance! There is too much competition and he's riding that two-bit horse!

He's beat before he starts; why did he even pay the entry fee? I'd be embarrassed to show up on that nag.

These are words sometimes overheard in the stands at a Ranch Rodeo Competition. Yes, everyone can spot a "loser." He's the guy that "never wins anything."

Seems like some folks just start out in life not having a chance; and it gets worse from there!

Sometimes you feel sorry for them; sometimes you find yourself involved in the criticism of others, and sometimes you feel that you are that person that doesn't have a chance.

There used to be an old country folk song that the old TV show Hee Haw made famous:

Doom, despair and agony on me;

Deep dark depression excessive misery.

If it weren't for bad luck, I'd have no luck at all.

Doom, despair, and agony on me.

At some time, everyone feels like they are “in over their head.” Have you ever felt like you just didn’t have what it takes?

You sit down at work or get ready to take a test in class and you just aren’t prepared. You have something that must get done and you don’t know how you can do it.

You enter a Ranch Rodeo event and you KNOW you aren’t ready. You know that there is NOT A CHANCE you are going to win.

If, however, you have done everything in your power to be ready for the work before you; if you have practiced your event and are as ready as possible, there can still be doubts.

Let me tell you something that happened to Peter, one of Jesus’ disciples. Peter and the disciples had just witnessed Jesus feed over 5000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish. You may remember that story. They had just seen a miracle!

As the crowd goes home, the disciples get into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee; a huge wind comes up and they are in a small boat that is rocking back and forth which is about to sink they think.

Jesus had stayed behind on the shore and so He comes walking across the TOP of the water like He is going to walk right by the boat. The disciples are shocked! They are scared!

But Peter says, Lord can I come out there and walk on the water with you? Now you know the other disciples are saying to themselves: Peter, you are nuts! There is NOT A CHANCE that you are going to walk on top of water!

But nonetheless, Peter gets out of the boat! He fixes his eyes on Jesus and he walks on the water!

He wanted to do something beyond his own abilities and go to Jesus in an impossible situation.

But then something happens. He starts thinking about how this is impossible! He takes his eyes off of Jesus the miracle worker! And he begins to SINK into the water.

Then Jesus reaches out His divine hand and lifts Peter up out of the water and He says:

Matthew 14:31

And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Peter didn’t have a chance of walking on water by himself. It would have been impossible without Jesus and when his eyes left Jesus, when he began to doubt, he found himself sinking.

If you ever hope to accomplish more than that which is within your reach, you must ALWAYS focus, not only your eyes, but all of your thoughts, on what God would have you do.

Not Likely!

Matthew 28:17

And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

Have heard this from folks in my lifetime:

- He will never amount to anything.
- His Dad was a drunk and you mind my words he will be, too.
- That whole family put together hasn't got enough brains to fill a thimble.

What people say about you or your family can hurt; but more sadly is that it can take away your hopes and dreams.

You do NOT have to let that happen. You are not in control of what others may say about you but you ARE in control of how you react.

Remember, little small minded people say such things. Wise people do not talk about others in such a manner. Why listen to someone ignorant and unwise?

The Bible says that people did not believe Jesus and He is God!

Even one of Jesus' future disciples said things about Him because of where He was raised as a child!

John 1:46

And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Nathanael was slamming Jesus because of where He was raised as a human child! How petty is that?

People did not see miracles done in Jesus' own home town because they misunderstood who He was:

Matthew 13:58

And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

It was **THEIR** unbelief; their own little bitty teensy tiny thinking minds that caused them to miss the blessings.

SO why would you be surprised that PEOPLE are going to be saying NEGATIVE things about you sometime in your life.

We are human and make mistakes that set us up for some criticism, but even when we are doing things the right way for the cause of Christ, we can still expect criticism.

Your confidence is not to be in man, but to be in God.

Psalm 118:8

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.

Impossible Odds!

Luke 1:37

For with God nothing shall be impossible.

Matthew 21:21

Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

I am **not** saying if you THINK hard enough about something that you can make it happen.

I am **not** saying if you PRAY HARD enough about something that you can make it happen.

I am saying that if God is in something, He will make it happen if you trust Him.

He is so FOR you and **not** AGAINST you.

He is the God of the Impossible. To take a human being that is born with a “sin nature” and to plan in advance, that is before you were born, to make a way for you to CHOOSE or not to CHOOSE Him as your Savior, as your way for complete forgiveness of your sins. That is the God of the impossible making it Possible for you to Choose Him and make Heaven your final destination instead of that place called Hell.

We were “chosen” in Him from the foundation of the world, but we have the option to accept His gift or to reject it. The choice is yours.

That God of the Impossible has made it possible for you to be redeemed.



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Lesson Three: **Buckles, Jackpots, & Payouts** Teen Wranglers

Illustration:

Bring to class or arena some prizes earned in various venues. Belt Buckles, Saddles, Ropes, Ribbons, Trophies, Certificates, for example.

References: Luke 14:28; Philippians 3:8a; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 9:24; 2 Timothy 4: 7-8

Entrance Fees

Not much in life is free; it costs somebody something even when it is free to you.

Someone may pay your entrance fee to an event, but it cost them the price. You can enter a competition that has no entrance fees, but still the facility, the equipment, the maintenance of all that goes into the competition, cost someone.

Someone “covered” the cost. Someone “paid for” the competition’s expenses.

It goes without saying that as a Christian, we know Who paid our Entrance Fee.

Generally speaking, when you go to an event to enter it, there will be an entrance fee. These can be expensive sometimes. A portion of that cost is put into the “pool” or the “Jackpot” for a cash payout.

There may be Buckles to be won, Jackpots to draw money off of, and sometimes big Payouts for placing well in the competition or rodeo event.

But sometimes as all competitors find out, sooner or later, you can get into a big hurry to enter a competition and not calculate the cost.

If you or your family has traveled a great distance to enter, then you may have invested quite a bit of cash to travel to the event and pay the entrance fees. It is a great disappointment if you

do not “place” well; but an even greater problem if no one counted how much this trip would cost out of pocket. As a result bills may go unpaid and that can be a big problem.

In a nutshell, you should always count the cost before you run to the competition.

Luke 14:28

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Go-Round

This scripture verse is referring to something far more important than the cost of building a house or a barn.

Jesus was explaining to people that decided to “follow” Him as His disciples that it was going to be a less than easy life. It will not be an easy “go.”

A Go-Round is a Rodeo term referring to “each time a competitor” has a turn to compete in an event.

After you are saved or born-again, that is, accepted Jesus as your Savior, then you have another choice to make; how to live the rest of your life!

Actually it is not really a choice. Repentance means that there will be changes in your life as well as your eternal destination’s change.

Despite all the high profile “preachers” you may hear on the television or radio or other media telling you that life is all “prosperity, good times, and smiles” once you are saved/born-again, that is not always the case or situation you find yourself in.

The disciples of Jesus were about to be put through some horrible things before they left the earth. Some were going to be killed because they followed Jesus.

In this scripture, Jesus is talking about MORE than accepting Him as your Savior. He is talking about being a disciple for Him. That it will cost you something along the way. **You most likely will never be called on to “die for your faith” as most of the disciples were, but you will be called on to be “different” from most people with a World View or a secular view.**

He says; think about it before you choose to live a godly separated life. Think about it before you surrender to go to the Mission Field some day or even to live for Him right now.

Jesus isn’t saying it is better to turn away from Him.

Jesus is saying that to be a disciple, a sold-out Christian is going to cost you something. He is not talking about money; He is talking about your life choices will not sync with the World View.

You won't fit into the cussing crowd, the drinking at the bar crowd, or the cheating and lying crowd if you are a disciple. Instead, you will have a desire to please the Lord.

To put Him first, means you are not first; and that is a pretty tall order.

Philippians 3:8a

Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:

You have a choice how you perform in your Go-Round.

- Do you understand that you may not be "picked" as a top performer in the World System?
- Do you understand that you may get battered around in the World System sometimes because of your faith?
- Do you understand that you may get "disqualified" by the judges in the World System?
- And do you understand that this World is a temporary dwelling place?

1 Corinthians 6:20

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Your entrance fee was paid by the King of Kings. Your Go-Round is your temporary life; eternity is just that ...it is forever.

Prizes

1 Corinthians 9:24

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

Philippians 3:7

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

There is a prize awaiting those that have run the race, finished the course.

But those that have run the race for the prize alone have missed the mark.

If it's about the money you take home; if you compete because you "need the money" you have lost the joy of the "run" already.

2 Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the

righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Your Entrance Fee was paid for by Jesus on the Cross of Calvary. You have a choice on whether or not to accept that Entrance Fee and accept Jesus. It's a choice.

Then once you accept Him, you have a choice on what you do with your "go"; how you live your life either as a Disciple or if you sit this one out.

If you have accepted Jesus, then there should be a desire to be like Him. That means, you should want to have a good Go-Round.

And at the end of your life, whenever that comes at whatever age you will be in a position to receive the Prize.

What is that Prize? It's Jesus. Some folks never get that. It's Jesus.



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Lesson Four: **The Judge Ain't Fair** Teen Wranglers

Suggested Illustration:

Arena: If you have someone in your group that normally shows animals, you may be able to utilize this resource. Have them bring one of their show animals into the arena and “show” the animal while talking to the showman, asking questions about why you do different things during the competition. You can have them there as an illustration throughout your lesson asking pertinent questions along with the lesson.

Inside: We have brought a lamb and on another occasion a goat inside buildings; spread a plastic tarp on the floor and walked in the haltered animal. The same scenario has worked.

References: 1 Corinthians 9: 22-27; John 5: 30b; Revelation 20: 10-14; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15

Out to Win

Competition day!

We remember at our house the Lamb Shows and competitions when our son was growing up.

The prep that went in before competition was remarkable.

- For weeks just the right diet to build muscle.
- For weeks just the right exercise including building up a step for them to have to stand front feet up and back feet down while they ate in order to increase the muscles where it counted for the judging. Then there was the running them uphill on our hill farm.
- Battling “foot rot”; if you have never battled this with sheep then you have missed the fun.....sarcasm noted here.
- Purchases of: Electric shearers and blades. Purchase of proper protective fencing as sheep have predators galore....and their own ignorance is one of them.

Your competition may be Barrel Races, or Team Roping, or other sports like baseball, but nonetheless, competition day comes and you know you will do better if you are prepared.

The bottom line is: You are OUT TO WIN!

1 Corinthians 9:24

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

This Bible scripture is using the analogy of a competition to illustrate a point. He is not talking about running an actual foot race or chariot race, but instead is talking about a “spiritual race.” He is not talking about competing to win the Lord’s favor either.

He is talking about pressing forward, of a striving to live the better life, the godly life as a born-again Christian. Here is the context:

1 Corinthians 9:22-27 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Paul is saying that he chooses to live a godly life so that his testimony is right and pure and will not cause others to either not come to Christ or others to live ungodly compromised lives.

The Judge’s Call Ain’t Fair

Have you ever competed with your animal and you felt like you should have had more points; a better showing? Did you ever think the Judge was not fair?

Have you ever watched a ball game and heard someone say that the referee made a bad call?

Have you ever played a basketball game and had the ref sound off his whistle and call a foul on YOU and you know you didn’t touch the guy?

Anytime you are dealing with people you have to realize that people are not perfect. Sometimes they are going to make a “bad call” or “judge unfairly.” As I learned growing up: Life is not always going to be fair; get used to it.

There is a day coming, however, when we will be dealing with the Just Judge, the One that makes only perfect calls.

Jesus said:

John 5:30b

..... I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

This is one judge we can't say: This Judge Ain't Fair, because He is the fairest of them all.

The Judge's Call is Final

Here is where a lot of folks get mixed up so you might want to pay attention to this part of the lesson very closely.

You are not going to be judged on your merits on whether or not you go to Heaven. The only merits you will bring to the gates of Heaven are not yours to begin with; simply Jesus's payment is all you will have if you have accepted Him.

There will be no scales setup to weigh your good deeds versus your bad deeds to see which outweighs the other.

There are two entirely different “judgments” coming. One is for the Saved/Born-again people and another one is for the Lost/unsaved/non-believers.

The Bible tells us that those that do NOT accept Jesus as Lord and Savior go to the Great White Throne Judgment. There the judge does all the talking. The defendant has no defense. There are no bails bondsmen, there are no do-overs, and there is only everlasting punishment for the sentence. Now you may think that is unfair. **What you think does not matter if you go to that Judgment.**

Revelation 20:10-14

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

But here is the good news: those that have accepted Jesus as Savior have a whole different “judgment” or “trial” coming.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Your works will be judged, but not to decide if you are going to Heaven or to that place called Hell. **You are either bound for Heaven or not by your position in Jesus Christ.**

Your works will be judged, but all that did not glorify Jesus will be burned away with no rewards attached. Those that are built on the Foundation that are “gold, silver, precious stones” will remain.

You are bound for one of these judgments; I am going before one of these judgments. Mine is this last one, the Judgment Seat of Christ. I am not going to that one because I am good. I am not going to that one because I teach you; **I am going to that one because I accepted Jesus as my Savior.**

Do NOT answer out loud, but think for a minute: Which one are you going to?