

The Stadiums We Build

Tyler King

With football season looming, I can't help but find fascination with the stadiums built specifically for this sport. One of the most recent stadiums, the Raiders' Allegiant Stadium, came with a final price tag of \$1.9B and is able to seat 65,000 people. With ground-breaking technology and an impressive digital currency system, the stadium has impressed a lot of people. Though, that price doesn't compare to the \$5.5B So-Fi stadium in Los Angeles constructed in 2016 which has additionally become a central space for major events happening in the Inglewood neighborhood. There's no doubt these feats of engineering and technology leave any spectator marveling.

Comically, the two teams with the two most impressive stadiums have had some relatively dry franchises in terms of championships. The Rams, even when in St. Louis, have appeared in the Super Bowl five times and have only won two of those (and they're one of the league's oldest teams). The Raiders have won three Super Bowls, but even with three championships, they trail behind teams like the Patriots (6 victories), Steelers (5 victories), and Cowboys (5 victories); ironically, some of the "lesser" stadiums in the NFL.

What can be concluded though, is the best stadium has no effect on a team's success. That should come as no surprise, but perhaps is a healthy reminder for us today. Sometimes our effort to craft, design, and invest in stadiums can fail in comparison to others. What stadiums have we constructed? The tower of academic status, the colosseum of financial success, the theater of social media image are all empires that we tend to fabricate. In each of these arenas, we are given the choice to honor God and allow Him to be the focus. Unfortunately, the tendency is to remove the branding of God and substitute with a nameplate of our own icon. When God's name is removed from those, they become all the more futile.

Look at the example of the disciples in Matthew 24. "Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple." The Lord's response addressed this very issue: "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." The disciples took pride in their "stadiums." Vainly, they tried to impress the Lord with what they had built, but Jesus knew there was something better in store for the future.

Similarly the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, seemed rather impressed with the work of his own hands as stated in Daniel 4:29,30. Though it was God who provided the experience of humility for the worldly king to come to know the heavenly ruler.

There will be moments and even seasons that we experience success and confidence. But the inspired Apostle would remind us multiple times that we are to look to God for such occasions (Col. 3:23,24; 1 Tim. 4:4,5; 1 Cor. 1:20-31). In every great stadium we construct, we can allow God's glory to be exalted rather than our own image. Inevitably, when we stand behind God and allow Him to receive glory for our successes, we find ourselves in a state of irresistible gratitude and praise.

WEEKLY PRAYER REQUESTS

- **RHONDA HOLISTER** is a member at Central and was diagnosed with cancer
- **REACH FAMILY** with recent losses of Olaree and Commodore.
- **TAYAH EDWARDS**, Jojo's friend, had her baby (thankful)
- **SHIRLENE CARGILE**, friend of Barry, her cancer has come back
- **JESS**, Ruth Edward's DIL, her recovery from back surgery
- **NEATA MCDONALD** is praying to find answers to health struggles
- **LEANZA FOWLER**, Hal's daughter, has been struggling with seizures
- **STEEN HALL**, Friend of Jay, bad motorcycle accident
- **TODD TEAL**, Doug's niece's husband, had stint put in and is recovering.
- **RONNIE HOWARD** and his recovery from open heart surgery
- **MELISSA DEWBERRY**, Ramay's Daughter, her recovery from foot surgery
- **KIMBRO FAMILY** in Oklahoma with loss of 11yr old daughter
- **KEN RAMAY** and all of his health struggles (thankful for new plan)
- **TODD PIERCE**, Jay's neighbor, recovery from Knee surgery
- **Peace and Comfort** for Jack Adkins and Family
- **DAILEY FAMILY** as they make preparations to move to Oklahoma
- **DON CICERO** and his recovery from surgery (doing better)
- **WILKEY FAMILY** and the lost of Lisa's mother.
- **BRENDA**, friend of Koli, is doing better
- **KENZI SWINDLE**, 6 years old, is fighting cancer and broke her leg
- **KEN AND BETTY RAMAY** and health struggles (Good news about Ken)
- **BARBIE SMITH'S FATHER** and all of health issues
- **ANDY CADDELL** and his road to recovery

ATTENDANCE

Worship A.M. ... 71
 Worship P.M. 51
 Wed P.M.45

CONTRIBUTION

Last Week.....\$2,716.23

BUDGET

Weekly.....\$3,000.00



| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Regina Hunt | 8/1 |
| Caleb Odom | 8/14 |
| Denise Mears | 8/17 |
| John Adams | 8/17 |
| Josie Jones | 8/18 |
| Jarrod Kersey | 8/21 |
| Yvonne Cicero | 8/21 |
| Ellye Nichols | 8/23 |
| Janie Nichols | 8/23 |
| Phillip Edwards | 8/31 |