

Immorality Justifies Harsh Penalties

The Penn State scandal and following penalties

brought sobering questions to the surface, those being what the appropriate consequences should be for those involved in the situation.

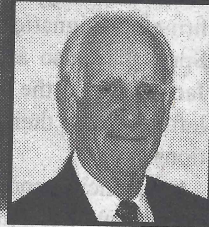
Many argued that the penalties inflicted by the NCAA were too harsh and that the monetary fine was too costly. The restriction from bowl games and the reduction of scholarships were too devastating. The removal of many wins that longtime Penn State Coach Joe Paterno had was unjust and even unethical.

There is no doubt that Jerry Sandusky took innocent boys and made them the victims of his sexually perverted passion. Young lives were vandalized and forever changed. Many say that Coach Paterno covered up the heinous acts of Sandusky in order to save the face of their glorious football program.

Some fans argued that the football players who worked so hard did not deserve to lose credit for the games they won and in my opinion they were right. But neither did the victims of Sandusky deserve what he did to them. The consequences of immorality and particularly that of a sexual nature usually stretch beyond the offender. When a person chooses to step outside the confines of their marriage to sow seeds of unfaithfulness it causes a ripple effect not

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only in their marriage but also in the lives of their children and community.

Jesus had some alarming things to say about those who harm children. "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea," Matthew 18:6.

Jesus was not finished there. He also said, "If your hand or foot causes you to sin cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter life lame or maimed rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire," Matthew 18:8-9.

My opinion is that Jesus really does not want us to cut off our limbs and gauge out our eyes but He only wants to shock us into taking immediate and decisive

action against any sinful behavior. If Jesus' words had been taken to heart by someone in power at Penn State they would have exposed Sandusky earlier in order to face the consequences that he eventually received and deserved. No doubt some kept quiet and should not have but in my opinion Joe Paterno was not one of them.

A football program should never be placed above the lives of human people and some of the penalties against Penn State were not too harsh because bad things happened in the showers of those locker rooms to young boys. Some lost their virginity involuntarily by a man whom they once trusted.

The sad reality is that no punishment will ever restore the innocence or heal the wounds of the victims. Only by the grace of God and the precious blood of Jesus can those sins be forgiven and those wounds be healed. The same Jesus who warns us of the dangers of immorality freely offers forgiveness and healing to all who repent of their sins and call upon His name.

From what his family and Paterno himself said, he reported what he knew about the Sandusky situation to who he thought were the proper authorities. When they apparently did not act on the situation maybe Paterno should have done more but he was not the only one to blame.