

MANY WAYS TO GET RESULTS.....

I had the joy of going to a Premiership football match this week. Leeds United v Newcastle with a friend of mine. Leeds won 4-1 (much to my friend's glee) and it occurred to me that the 5 goals give some indication about different approaches to mission....

1-0

Tanaka scored for Leeds by shooting low. The ball hit one defender on the boot and flew up hitting the leg of another Newcastle player. The ball looped high in the air and over the hapless goalkeeper and in the net. It was credited as an own goal against the defenders.

Maybe we just need to put something of the gospel out there. We don't know how it will rattle around and where it will land. It may well lead somewhere we neither see nor intended. But God sees and welcomes the win we did not intend!

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow." (1 Corinthians 3:6)

2-0

Calvert-Lewin received a classic cross from the right and rose above the defender to head low into the net.

Sometimes what is intended is what happens. We just need to keep doing the basics well. Keep persevering in making relationships, loving and caring, taking opportunities to proclaim the good news and it will achieve Kingdom results!

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile." (Romans 1:16)

3-0

Calvert Lewin made a jinking run making space in the box and shot low into the corner.

Sometimes we might need to adjust our position to find the opportunity. Be nimble and not leaden footed to find the gap where a door might be open to an enquirer.

"To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some." (1 Corinthians 9:22)

4-0

Okafor got the ball outside the edge of the penalty box, saw an opening and just took a shot. It was a bit of a speculative punt but it went in low on the right corner.

Sometimes we just need to give it a go! You never know what might happen....

⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

4-1

Leeds lost momentum and some focus in the last 15 minutes being so far ahead for most of the match and Newcastle scored a very simple consolation goal.

We cannot be complacent and should always pray protection over the mission of the church and the witnesses and against opposition to that mission. The enemy opposition seeks any chance to make dents in our efforts!

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

We are of course seeking to enter the joy of the Master – our manager- Jesus Christ! And he has given us our instructions for the game.

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Let's go out there with hunger, doing the basics well, being creative, having a go, not caring who scores but working as a team, being courageous and always wary of the tactics of the opposition, praying protection over all we do.

We will start to see the wins!

Every blessing.

Your brother in Christ

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PS if you want to see the highlights of these goals for context see here!

https://youtu.be/_8E1F_vgLkM?si=99FsYg5mZqZn-m