**NATIONAL SPORTS SUNDAY**

Everyday faith.

The idea that all we do in life matters to God and we can live it to the praise of his glory.

So, if the everyday matters, so must sport, right? Sport and well-being must be as big a deal to God as anything else, especially as we devote so much time to it. Doing sport, watching it, talking about it, thinking about it.

Too often, we haven’t connected our love for sport and well-being with our love for God or to see it as a wonderful divine gift for human expression. But in doing so, we can link other people to the love God has for them.

It’s sometimes said that sport is marmite – you either love it or hate it. Maybe it goes back to whether you were picked early for teams in school PE lessons or not. And watching so much elite sport in the UK: Harry Kane in football, Dina Asher-Smith in athletics, Emma Raducanu in tennis – we can assume sport is not for us. But most of the population is in the same boat: we’re not brilliant at it, but we get a buzz from our involvement. And this is where well-being comes in, too. Because it’s about the use of our bodies. Not necessarily pushing them to the limits of human endurance and skill, but simply trying to keep healthy week by week.

The thing about sport and well-being is that it’s not just about me, it’s about us. Teams bond over sport. Individual sports bring us new friendships. And well-being activities like Pilates or healthy walking are done alongside others who we get to know bit by bit.

It’s great fun. And it’s also a space in which to share the love of God.

Perhaps you haven’t thought of it that way before. If not, this National Sports Sunday is a chance to figure out what God might be saying to you and your church.

I often pray for people on request in their everyday faith. And one of the things I hear time and time again is a specific ask: I just want to know what God wants me to do, and I’ll do it.

One way of answering that is to keep everything on the table. Not to rule something out just because we think God won’t be interested in it.

So I make this plea to you: stop for a moment and think what sport and well-being means to God. Where do you fit into this? Where could your church fit into this?

As we stumble our way through the pandemic, we have a chance to put sport and well-being at the heart of a good recovery in Christ. To show his love for all that is spontaneous and free. For the sheer joy of being alive and alongside others. In worship of the God who in Jesus knows the end from the beginning, but who thankfully doesn’t give us the result before we play the game.

*Simon Burton-Jones*

*Bishop of Tonbridge*

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