

Is Your Christian Booster Card Up to Date?

Mark 16:15 - And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

Billy Napier is the Gators new football coach. What must his 5-step approach be to build a championship team?

Step 1 - Building his team – hiring coaches, analysts, conditioning, nutrition, recruiting, NIL.

Step 2 – Excite the team behind the team, Gator Nation led by the Gator Boosters – There is excitement around his hire and what is expected in the coming years from the Gator nation, the long-time unconditional believers in everything Gator. One thing we can say about the Gator nation is that it is *passionate* about the Gators. The thing I liked the best from his first news conference, he quoted scripture, showed he was a Christian and proud of it.

Step 3 - Key to success is recruiting the best players and then developing them to their fullest. The good news is that most high school kids have heard of the Gators, and he is having early success at getting them to come visit and see what the Napier team and University of Florida is all about. It looks like recruits are reacting quite positively so far. Interesting thing is most staff have worked with him before, and seem eager to work with him again. Then once players are here, their full overall development into men becomes paramount to their individual and the team's overall success, and their ultimate success in life.

Step 4 – Preach patience. He has preached being patient from the start, not overreacting or trying to move too fast, but to build a strong foundation and the pieces will then come together.

Step 5 – Observe results. The results so far have been impressive – he only signed a few players in the early period but they were all high quality players, he has also had good success in the transfer portal picking up 6 additional players, and seems to be getting a good reception with the player visits he has had since so, hopefully, will close strong on his first signing class. Then only time will tell how successful Coach Napier will be!

Now let's look at another team that we are also on, a **much more important** team - God's team, otherwise known as the Christian Nation, which is made up of all the individual Christian Boosters. Unlike the Gator Boosters, which rank you based on your financial contributions to the team, your Christian Booster card is maintained by God, and only He knows your level of commitment to His team.

Now just *imagine* if the Christian Nation got as excited about their team as the Gator Nation! *Imagine* if we showed the same *passion* for our team that Gator fans showed for their team.

Imagine if the Christian nation spoke as highly of their team to others and worked as hard to recruit new members to our team.

In spite of the passion shown by Gator fans (and all fan bases!), the result is that you will still have years of disappointment. Think about all the ups and downs Gator fans (or any other "nation" of sports fans) endure over the years. It can actually get quite tiring being a sports fan.

Yet the Christian nation has one thing really going for it – consistency of message. We have God’s Word through the Bible that is consistent, clear, and unchanged in over 2,000 years of use. We know we have been saved and redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, we know that our sins are forgiven and that through the grace of God we have eternal life ahead of us. We need to be excited and passionate and share this good news with others.

Imagine if we could bring back some of the many previous followers of Jesus who have been lost over the last 20, 30, 40 years, or those who have not come back just since COVID started. Covenant church members can directly help make that happen.

Since Pastor Don has been here, he has told us we have the responsibility to reach out to others who may be unchurched. He challenged each of us for the year 2022 to speak with someone who we believe does not yet know Jesus Christ and see if we can help them to open their heart to get to know him. Before Don, Pastor Carl was giving us those same type of challenges. Remember only Jesus can bring others truly to Him, but we must be more supportive to opening the doors of their hearts.

Imagine if we could help recruit young people, the future of our country, to the Christian Nation, those who may never have had exposure yet to the Christian faith. We can do that through our new ministry we are starting this year with FCA, both through financial support and also human support.

Also, remember that it is not our job to convert folks to the Christian Nation, all we can do is help to open the door of their heart where Jesus can come in, continue the recruitment, and close the deal. We need to have patience, like Napier said, it may be a long process sometimes.

In closing today, I ask you - What does your Christian Booster Card show about you today? What does your daily life show about your level of *passion* for Our Savior? How bright does your light shine for Jesus as Tina reminds us every week?

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Benediction:

Numbers 6:22 – May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; may the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.