



South Hill Church of Christ
1136 South Hill Avenue
PO Box 3425
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72702-3425
Voice & Fax: 479-521-6809
Lsgage129@cs.com
Web: www.southhillcoc.org

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How Much Is Enough?

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

The dateline and opening sentence said it all: "JUPITER, Fla. — The St. Louis Cardinals made Albert Pujols what they said was their best offer. It wasn't enough. Get ready, baseball. Pujols seems headed for the open market next fall."

I read an article yesterday stating that the Baseball Players Union was encouraging Albert Pujols to hold out for big money and set a new standard for the players. I am sad to see that the union may be winning out. Whatever happened to loyalty to a team? The players talk about how much the fans mean to them in a city, but when contract negotiations roll around they seem to forget that the fans exist. What has happened to sports in America? How much is enough?

According to the AP, "Pujols will make \$16 million this season in his contract's final year, with \$4 million of the money deferred with no interest." And what is the deal he has just turned down? Again, according to the AP, "The Cardinals would not reveal their offer, though it was believed to be somewhere around \$200 million for eight years, possibly with an opportunity for Pujols to obtain an ownership stake in the franchise once his playing days are complete." I don't know about you, but \$25 million a year sounds pretty sweet to me. I know that the owners are making big money, too. I understand that the players want their fair share of the profits generated by the professional game of baseball. But, to be quite honest, I am grieved over the whole spectacle of professional sports in America today, from baseball to basketball and football. Those who follow the NFL know that we may or may not have a season in the fall of 2011. The owners and the players are haggling over money!

There are several things in the current professional sports scene that disturb me. The matter of loyalty is one of them. It seems that there is no real team spirit in professional sports anymore. The players and owners alike are looking out for themselves. It doesn't matter on what team I play, just as long as the money is right.

There was an exception to this recently when Derek Fisher of the LA Lakers decided to stay with his team rather than claim more money in the free agent draft. Fisher wrote on his website last year: "'I have decided to continue with Kobe, continue with our teammates and the fans of Los Angeles,' Fisher said in a statement on his website. 'While this may not be the most lucrative contract I've been offered this offseason, it is the most valuable.'"

I've written all this just to remind you of how much you are worth to God. How much was God willing to pay and how much was Jesus willing to give for you and for me? There was no haggling or disloyalty on display when Jesus went to Calvary to purchase our salvation. That's how much God loves you!

"For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1 Timothy 6:10