

Baseball Team Devotion-The Base on Balls

Scripture Lesson: Romans 3:23, 1John 1:9

The base on balls or the walk is not a pitcher's best friend. As a matter of fact 39% of leadoff base on balls, come around to score. A base on balls occurs when the pitcher throws 4 pitches out of the strike zone in an at bat. The batter is awarded first base because the pitcher "missed the mark" of the strike zone. The career leader in base on balls is Hall of Famer Nolan Ryan with 2,795. The single season record is held by Amos Rusie of the then New York Giants. Rusie issued 287 base on balls in 1870 and holds 4 of the top ten all time base on balls in a season records. In 2009 AJ Burnett of the Yankees led the American League with 97 base on balls, while Doug Davis of the Arizona Diamondbacks issued 103 base on balls leading the National League. That is a lot of "missing the mark" of the strike zone.

In our Scripture lesson today Paul writes about another "missing the mark". In Romans 3:23 he writes "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God". The word for sin literally means in the Greek language to miss the mark. Sin is missing the mark of living that God has set for us. When we sin, and all of us have done that, we can't be all God intends for us to be. The penalty for missing the mark in baseball, is to be given a free pass to first base. The penalty for missing the mark in life is to be separated from God. The good news is found in 1John 1:9, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us from our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." If we believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior and confess our sins, those sins are forgiven. In baseball, when we miss the mark pitching, we can work on our mechanics and get better. In life when we miss the mark in living, Jesus is there for us to forgive us our sins when we confess them to Him! Isn't it great to be loved that much. For Jesus paid the price for our sins and mistakes by giving up His life for our sins! Let's thank God today that He loves us this much!!

Object lesson: Look up Nolan Ryan's career records and share them with the team to point out that even though he missed the mark so many times, he still became a Hall of Famer. We can miss the mark with God and still live a great life for Him.

