**“Winning”**

Though famed Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi said it often, beginning in 1959, actually UCLA football coach Henry “Red” Sanders first (in 1950) proffered the notion that “Winning isn’t everything- it’s the only thing.”

This concept, and others with the same idea, has affected or infected our culture until we have become very *competitive* people. We are taught early one that we have to “win” at everything, and so we *compete* against our siblings (“sibling rivalry”) in the home- mostly for attention and or affection. At school, we compete academically for grades and placements; in athletics, “winning” is the be all and end all; many of us can’t even enjoy recreation without making it a contest to be won. We compete for and in higher education; in our vocations, the workplace becomes the “field of battle: for recognition, advancement, the best job, and the most money. We even compete on social media to have the best “selfie”- or at least the most of them; we want and compete to have the most “friends,” the biggest number of “followers,” the most romantic or caring spouse, the most accomplished kids, or even the best “dinner.” Darwin’s influence through “survival of the fittest” may have contributed to this mindset and mantra, but we cannot deny that our thirst for “winning” is pervasive, or persuasive.

Perhaps we should, as God said through His prophet Haggai, (re)*consider our ways,* cf. Haggai 1:5,7….

1. **The world says, “Win at all costs.”**

**Jesus says, “Do the right thing no matter it costs,” 1Pet.1:3-9; 4:1-2,12-19.**

1. **The world says, “Winning is everything.”**

**Jesus says, “You may have lose everything,” Matt.19:16-22; Phil.3:1-11.**

1. **The world says, “You have to be first- everything else is just the first, second, or third loser.”**

**Jesus says, “the first shall be last and the last shall be first,” Matt.19:23-30.**

1. **The world says, “Win so you can be served.”**

**Jesus says, “Serving is winning,” John 13:1-17.**

1. **The world says, “If you win, you deserve the best of everything this world has to offer.”**

**Jesus says, “I gave everything in the world so that you can have the best of heaven,” Phil.2:1-11.**

**Conclusion: Coach Sanders was *right* we he said that “Winning isn’t everything- it’s the only thing.” He just had the wrong *contest* in mind. Life is a “race” that must *run with endurance* (Heb.12:1)to the *finish line* of faithfulness (2Tim.4:7-8), not a competition to be won over your fellow participants. Yes, we must compete, but the opponents are Satan, self, and sin.**