

Coaches have potential to teach Christian understanding of life

January 15, 2010

ABILENE—Christian coaches are in a position to teach far more than Xs and Os, a [Hardin-Simmons University](#) professor believes.

Bob Moore, professor of fitness and sports science, considers sports fallow ground for teaching Christian principles.

“Within sport, you have many opportunities in which to help people develop a Christian understanding of who they are, and I think that’s what we all have to strive to do—try to realize why we are on the face of the earth,” he said. “I think through sport, you can teach somebody great lessons about that.

{youtube}ios-TE9hNto&hl=en&fs=1&rel=0{/youtube}

HSU professor Bob Moore explains why sports presents opportunities for "teachable moments."

“There are so many teachable moments within sport that, as coaches, you can try to instill within players characteristics such as self-sacrifice, sportsmanship, work ethic, honor and respect.”

While Moore at one time was a high school basketball coach, now his coaching focuses on three of his five children and their teammates. Two more still are a little young for team sports.

“I think it’s a little easier to form their philosophies during those formative years, but, of course, I think we can help them develop their understanding of who they are as Christians at every level,” Moore said.

A key to making a difference as a Christian coach, however, is for the coach

to have his own life in proper perspective, he cautioned.

“First of all, the coach has to make sure they have a proper understanding of their own Christian philosophy, because I believe you can’t give what you don’t have.

“That’s the first step—to be reflective as a coach and determine what your purpose in life is. If you understand that your purpose in life is to help build up the kingdom—which is what Christ called us to do, to help him in doing that—then I think the coach understands he’s simply an instrument for God,” Moore explained.

“At that point, you have a foundation in which to be successful. Once that foundation is in place, you can pass it on to your players either by what you say or how you act,” he said.

Any coach who wants to make an impact on players must closely monitor his own reaction to officials and the other team, and examine how he defines success. Coaches who profess Christianity and then allow themselves to depart from that lifestyle on the court or field confuse the people for whom they are supposed to be setting an example, Moore continued.

“I think you can help your players achieve not only a good sense of who they are as Christians, but also that ultimately you are going to be successful as you teach your players to sacrifice for the good of the team and to understand that each player has a role on the team,” Moore said.

“I want my kids to become better athletes, I want them to become more physically fit, to learn to compete—all the wonderful things I think sports provide you. But I think ultimately, it’s much more important to me that my kids become good people and good Christians.”

