

GOD'S SAINTS
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I had been pondering for several days prior to the Super Bowl the scripture in Psalm 16:2-3: "O, my soul, you have said to the Lord, 'You are my Lord, my goodness is nothing apart from You.' As for the saints (H6918 – holy, clean, sanctify, dedicate, consecrate) who are on the earth, 'They are the excellent (H117 – powerful, mighty, noble, gallant, goodly, famous) ones, in whom is all my delight (H2656 – pleasure, desire, purpose, acceptable).'" I began to say and pray, "May the REAL saints, please stand up!" I think I want to add to that, "Will the REAL saints stand up and stand out!" I have followed the New Orleans Saints football team since their beginning. Sometimes I followed with more zeal than other times. After giving my heart to Jesus, I found that I could watch football, but it was a pleasure not a priority. To be honest, I was excited to see how well the N.O. Saints were playing this year. We have been praying for an impact on the 7 mountains/molders of culture by the Kingdom of God. One of the 7 M's is entertainment, so why not see our God use His REAL saints in football! I was blessed to hear Drew Brees' s testimony. And how about the testimony of Tim Tebow of Florida?

Back in 1997, the Holy Spirit began to tug at my heart concerning a ministry outreach to New Orleans in the midst of Mardi Gras. I kept thinking, "Why would anybody want to be in the midst of THAT and try to minister to people?" I had my excuses as to why I couldn't go and participate in ministry during that time. I did have a part time job and that was the best excuse. I suddenly received a call that the job had been terminated immediately! I still complained to the Lord that I just couldn't be in the midst of all that ungodliness. Wednesday night came and off I went to prayer meeting. During prayer requests, a little boy asked if we could pray for his sick dog. Immediately, a scripture leapt into my heart and mind about God caring for cattle. So, I opened my Bible to Jonah and read Jonah 4:11 (AMP) "And should not I spare (H2347 – compassionate, pity, regard) Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons not [yet old enough to] know their right hand from their left, and also many cattle [not accountable for sin]?" As I read the verse, I didn't see Nineveh, I saw New Orleans. My heart was pierced! I got down on the floor between the pews and began to ask God to forgive my selfishness, lack of compassion, and disobedience. I then got up, saying that I would go home and call immediately to see if there was still an available space on the team. Of course, the team leader was delighted for me to join them! And, join them I did for the next 3 years!

That weekend in New Orleans impacted my life. It was key to the direction that God began to take me in the next years. So, in the midst of all that is wrong in New Orleans and might be wrong in the New Orleans Saints, God is still a God that cares for the people of that city. So, for all the prayers that have been prayed, all the prayer

strategies that have been carried out for that city, why couldn't God give a football star a platform to the city and the world to honor Him and witness to multitudes that wouldn't go to a Crusade even if it was Billy Graham! Isaiah 55:8-9 (AMP) "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."