

# MercEmail A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

## It Didn't Count

by Steve Higginbotham (August 8, 2017)

On this day in 1988, the Chicago Cubs played the first ever night game at Wrigley Field. For nearly 60 years, other teams were playing at night and were seeing a huge increase in attendance and revenue. So on August 8, 1988, the Chicago Cubs finally hosted their first night game under the lights.

However, if you look at the record books, you will see that the first night game at Wrigley Field was not played on August 8, 1988, but on August 9, 1988. Why the discrepancy? Because the first game didn't count. It was rained out in the fourth inning. So while the players played and fans cheered at Wrigley field on August 8, what they were doing that night didn't count.

I can't help but think of how many spiritual applications this historical tid-bit packs.

- Consider how many people eat the Lord's Supper each week, but fail to remember Jesus while doing so. No one can deny they attempted to memorialize Jesus, but their attempt "didn't count" (1 Corinthians 6:27).
- Consider how many people sit on a pew and respectfully bow their heads in prayer, but their lives are full of hidden sins. While an attempt was made to pray, it "didn't count" (James 5:16).
- Consider how many hymns are sung by people who give no thought to the words they are singing because they're more concerned about the musical notation and aesthetics. While an attempt at praise was made, it "didn't count" (Ephesians 5:19).
- Consider how many people are "baptized," but through a mode or for reasons that are not authorized. While an attempt was made in such cases, "it didn't count" (Romans 6:17).
- Consider how many good works are done to be "seen of men." While no one would deny the works helped the recipients, it "didn't count" for the one doing the works (1 Corinthians 13:3).

On August 8, 1988 the players played just as hard as they did on August 9, 1988. On August 8, 1988, the fans cheered just as enthusiastically as they did on August 9, 1988. Yet, in spite of their efforts and feelings, the game on August 8, 1988 didn't count because of the rules.

Likewise friends, the religion of Jesus has rules. If we want to be pleasing to God, more is required of us than just "doing" and "feeling;" we must "do" and "feel" according to the rules (2 Timothy 2:5).

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