

# MercEmail A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

## Unintended Consequences

July 10, 2011

On July 7, 2011 the Oakland A's were playing the Texas Rangers. In the second inning, one of the A's hit a foul ball that went into the stands, then bounced back onto the field. So as a friendly gesture, Ranger's outfielder, Josh Hamilton picked up the ball and tossed it to a fan in the stands. Hamilton's toss was a little short, causing the man to lean over the railing in an attempt to catch the ball. Unfortunately, this caused the man to lose his balance, topple over the railing and fall head first to his death.

I can only imagine how badly Josh Hamilton feels. Although he intended no harm to this fan, his action resulted in the death of this man. As I have listened to the news reporters and sportscasters comment on this sad event over the weekend, I couldn't help but think of a spiritual application. For how many times does this very thing happen in our homes and in our churches.

How many fathers and mothers will make spiritual decisions that are not intended to harm their children, but they do that very thing. A period of "spiritual slumber" for mom and dad results in the unintended faithlessness of their children. Harsh words, judgmental attitudes, and a critical spirit unintentionally sours a child, spouse, or neighbor and they rebel against what they're told is "Christianity."

Friends, no man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself (Romans 14:7). We all influence other people for the better or for the worse. Give diligence to make sure that the choices you make in life don't have unintended consequences that will haunt you later.

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