

Protecting “The Blind Side”

Foot racing provides Paul with an analogy in 1 Corinthians 9:24, and a report on a recent book on professional football suggests one here. Michael Lewis’ book *The Blind Side* observes that while the attention of football spectators is usually on the quarterback, running backs, or receivers, those who really know the game also place high value elsewhere. While the star quarterback may be the most highly paid player, the second most highly paid player is the left offensive tackle, a player relatively few people watch and one about whom some do not even know.

Why is this relatively obscure player paid so much money? Because he protects the blind side of the vulnerable quarterback. When preparing to pass, a right-handed quarterback stands facing right, and therefore he is blind to any huge opponents rushing to hit him from his left. Therefore team managers search for a 350-pound player with long arms and huge hands to protect him on that side, the left offensive tackle, and, except for perhaps the quarterback himself, they pay him the highest salary of any player: six to eight million dollars each to the top five of those players in the National Football League.

Some Christians protect the blind side: they may not be as visible as, say, the preacher or prominent class teacher, but they are valuable, and—by the discerning—they are highly valued.

Quiet but determined parents protect the blind side. In today’s youth culture, attention may be on the teenager, the youth minister, the coach, the popular speaker. But it is that mother who warns her daughter about innocent-looking but dangerous habits and companions that may blindside her when she is too excited to be aware (Pro. 2.1-5; Eph. 6.1).

Elders protect the blind side. Either well-meaning but uninformed and wrong-thinking people on the one hand, or else attractive but sinister and vicious false teachers on the other may approach the congregation with appealing but dangerous notions. The elders protect the church from unnoticed and unseen dangers (Matthew 7.15; Acts 20.26-31; Titus 2.9-14).

True Bible scholars and teachers protect the blind side. Every generation produces unbalanced, contorted, and often weird religious notions that capture the attention of the innocent, the unknowing, and the enthused. The Bible scholar of integrity calmly and methodically but courageously points out the deep truth of scripture as opposed to the shallow and distorted messages of the moment (Ezra 7.10; Acts 17.11; Heb. 4.12).

They may not be the most visible, but they are among the most needed. Value those who protect the blind side. —**John H Parker**