



The Conifer church of Christ is currently meeting at the Mountain Resource Center in Conifer.

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# MOUNTAIN RAMBLIN'

Provided by the Conifer church of Christ

Number 2

## What's First? by Will Hanstien

About a year ago, Rick Reilly wrote an article for Sports Illustrated titled, "Let Us Play." He describes in his article how many families in America are opting to engage in recreational activities on Sunday instead of attending worship services. He quotes many religious leaders who have decried the loss of spirituality in our society. Reilly attributes this to parents placing too much importance on the success of their children in sports. He says, "For some reason over-caffeinated parents feel they have to 'keep up' with the Joneses. They used to do it with their cars. Now they do it with their kids." Reilly also comments on parents inundating their children with recreation. He says again, "... I just feel sorry for these kids who get nothing but organized sports crammed down their gullets 24/7."



The Bible tells us what is truly important in this life. We are told to love God

more than anything else. Jesus says, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment" (Matthew 22:37-38). We are told to put the Lord first in everything we do. Paul says, "I urge you brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service" (Romans 12:1). The writer of Hebrews makes it plain where our energy should be directed when he says, "... not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:25).

Rick Reilly may not be a person we would normally turn to for spiritual advice, but his article helps to remind us that the Lord expects us to put him first. When we choose other activities over him, we are not putting him first. When we choose other activities we send a message to children that God is not first. Reilly makes a tremendous point when he writes, "Just remember, when little Shaniqua has two free throws to win or lose a game on some Sunday morning, good luck finding somebody who'll answer your prayers." Let us all remember what is truly important in this life and strive to put God first.

## Scientists, Soldiers, and Fish Scales by Eric Lyons, M.Min.

Operating on a grant from the U.S. Army, scientists from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are developing better body armor for soldiers. Surprisingly, the inspiration for their work comes from a foot-long African fish known as *Polypterus senegalus*.

According to scientists, the fish's "armor" is able to protect it from others of its own species, as well as other carnivores. Its overlapping armored scales "first dissipate the energy of a strike, then protect against any penetrations to the soft tissues below and finally limit any damage to the shield to the immediate area surrounding the assault" (Crane, 2008). What makes the fish's armor so effective? Aside from its four layers of overlapping scales, "researchers believe the dermal scales' different composite materials [including bone and dentine—EL] and the geometry and thickness of various layers" all contribute to the armor's strength and effectiveness in protecting the animal (Crane, 2008). Dr. Christine Ortiz, lead MIT researcher on the *Polypterus* project, stated: "Such fundamental knowledge holds great potential for the development of improved biologically inspired structural materials" (Bryner, 2008).



Brilliant scientists in the 21st century are spending an untold amount of time, energy, and money studying the scale structure of a fish, in hopes of designing new and improved armor applications for U.S. soldiers and military vehicles. Scientists admit that the "design" of the overlapping scale layers is "fascinating, complex and multiscale" (Crane, 2008). Yet, at the same time, we are told that this fish, which is inspiring state-of-the-art human armor systems, had no Designer (Bryner, 2008). Once again, naturalistic evolution allegedly was the great cause of a "fascinating" and "complex" creature. But design demands a designer. An effect (especially one of this magnitude) demands an adequate cause. In truth, blind chance, plus non-intelligence, plus random mutations, plus eons of time, neither designed nor caused *Polypterus senegalus*. Only an intelligent Designer could make such an awe-inspiring creature. As the psalmist wrote: "This great and wide sea, in which are innumerable teeming things, living things both small and great. O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all" (104:25,24, emp. added).



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