

<http://diananyad.com/tim-tebow-separation-of-church-and-sport/>

Go

DEC

JAN

FEB



1 capture

30 Jan 2012

2011

2012

2013

About this capture



Search this site...

Submit

Diana Nyad Xtreme Dream 103 miles. Cuba to Florida. Summer 2012

HOME SUPPORT THE DREAM! JOIN THE CONVERSATION TEDMED HUFFINGTON POST ABOUT DIANA BLOG
BRAVABODY PARTNERS SUPPORT THE DREAM CONTACT

Home » Blog » Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport

Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport

Posted by Xtreme Dream Team on Jan 27, 2012 in Blog, Slider | 40 comments

Now that the Tim Tebow show is over for this season, I have observed enough to take a stand on his proselytizing on the field.

As a football player, he's a force. A bold leader, a positive burst of energy, an agile and powerful runner, even if he's not yet an impressive, accurate passer. I have no reason to doubt that he will carve out a successful NFL career for himself.

I do, however, rail against his acting out his faith in such a public forum, while in his team uniform.

When at the University of Florida, he was well known for painting different numbers of Biblical scriptures into his eye black. You would see the number "3:16" under his eyes, for instance, in reference to that chapter and verse of the Bible. In the end, the NCAA outlawed players displaying such public signs of personal faith.

I, for one, was a public radio journalist who spoke out against his eye black expressions. He was in his University uniform, representing the Gator Nation. It wasn't fair to his teammates, nor anybody else from his school, to be lumped in with his own private beliefs.

So now he is a Denver Bronco and again he sets himself apart from his teammates by constant public display of his Christian faith.

Quite a few players kneel in a quick prayer or point to the sky in recognition of their God after a successful moment on the field. OK. But if you tune in to the Tebow proselytizing throughout a game, it is outrageous in its persistence. NFL Films did an hour special on Tebow late in the season. Unlike the networks that cover live games, NFL films have microphones in the huddles, on the sidelines. You can hear every breath, every syllable.

When Tebow sits with the quarterback coach on the bench, when he approaches the guys in the huddle, when he runs to a wide receiver after a big play, he does say the right "football stuff". "Come on guys, this is THE 3rd down we need. We need it NOW." But before any syllable he utters, every single time, it is first "God is good". "God is great." "My God is an awesome God". "It's God's will." As he roams

Archives

Select Month

Diana's Tweets

Diana Nyad

- If you haven't yet sipped the [@TEDMED](http://t.co/cPjAv1Wg) Kool-Aid, get yourself a straw & take a look at the video they released this wk <http://t.co/JTWomGWF> about 2 hours ago from HootSuite
- Drinking the Kool-Aid That Is TEDMED <http://t.co/cPjAv1Wg> @HuffingtonPost 07:15:08 PM January 28, 2012 from HootSuite
- Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport <http://t.co/Coq9d5Qp> 07:03:10 PM January 27, 2012 from HootSuite
- @boulderada Thanks for the FF. Hope you have a magnificent Friday. What's your favorite inspirational quote? 03:54:37 PM January 27, 2012 from HootSuite in reply to Boulderada
- I'm looking for a new quote for my website. What's your favorite inspirational quote? 03:44:50 PM January 27, 2012 from HootSuite

the sideline, mouthing, you think he's talking to the defense on the field, urging them on. No, he's singing, "God is my saviour. God is almighty".

He often gathers even the Christians on the other team after a game and gets them in a circle to kneel and pray together.

[1 capture](#)
30 Jan 2012

I say take it into the locker room. What if, at the end of every session of Congress, the Christians gathered and knelt and prayed together, right there on the Congress floor? As was true at the University of Florida, doesn't this constant Christian promotion, in a Broncos uniform, trump the other common bonds of the team? Doesn't Tebow separate himself from his non-Christian teammates?

Or am I just the kid who in first grade went to the principal to demand that I not be forced to speak aloud the words "Under God" in the pledge of allegiance to the flag? (Point of interest: The original Pledge of Allegiance, written in 1892 by Francis Bellamy, did not have the words "Under God". President Eisenhower in 1954 requested that Congress add the two words, despite the protest of Bellamy's daughter.)

Tim Tebow is admirably inspired by his strong faith. He does many good works, from building schools for the poor to bringing disabled and underprivileged individuals to the sidelines of his games. His particular brand of Christianity requires that he spread the gospel far and wide. **But when he wears a uniform, he owes that team the respect of making his faith more private expression, less public spectacle.**

[f Share](#) [Tweet](#) [share](#) [share](#)

40 Comments



Mike Lewis

Well said.

January 27, 2012

Reply



elizabeth

Thank you for saying this.

I also wonder if he would be so lauded if he were of a different faith.

January 27, 2012

Reply



robert

would he be so criticized if he was a different faith. (i am not the same faith as he is)

January 27, 2012

Reply



Steve Schatz

"Under God" is the only good part of the pledge. The rest is reverence and perversion for a monolithic state (after the Civil War) versus a union of independent states (the clear and original Constitutional structure). Socialism makes the state god. The Pledge was written by a socialist. "Under God" at least gives this brainwashing some perspective.

January 27, 2012

Reply

[1 capture](#)
30 Jan 2012

Skeldaddy

January 28, 2012

You are not seriously trying to make this a states rights issue?

DEC JAN FEB
◀ 30 ▶
2011 2012 2013



▼ About this capture

Reply



Steve Schatz

January 28, 2012

I'm seriously pointing out that the pledge is mostly tyrannical. And, "under God" is the only good part. Anyone who can say the rest of the pledge with pride and omit "under God" has a Bizarro frame of reference.

Reply



Millicent

January 27, 2012

Dear Diana ~ I admire and honor Your candor though I disagree with You wholeheartedly! Praying for Your Brilliant success this Summer 2012. With the warmest of regard,
Millicent A.

Reply



sighkling

January 27, 2012

Why not try praying a lil harder when you attempt swimming the Cuba Florida attempt...couldn't hurt.

Reply



Anne

January 27, 2012

No reason to be snarky.

Reply



roger

January 27, 2012

Being a practicing Christian in todays world is challanging and we need to temper our witness in consideration of others who do not believe as we do. There is a time and place for all of us to profess our beliefs and we need to understand where and when that is.

Christian ballplayers have been joining each other on the field for prayer after games for years. Long before Tebow arrived.

Reply

Shirley

January 27, 2012



While I have no problem with Tebow or anyone else finding strength and comfort in their faith (whatever it maybe), I am OVER having "Christianity" in particular shoved at me at every opportunity. I had a religious upbringing, which I eventually found quite disappointing when I realized how many hypocrites there are out there. While Tebow, and many others, practice what their faith preaches, there are FAR too many who practice their faith only in church. Go ahead, wrap yourself in your faith, but PLEASE stop trying to suffocate me in your wrappings.

Reply

[1 capture](#)
30 Jan 2012



Beth

January 27, 2012

As a UF graduate and total atheist, who cares what Tebow does when the ball isn't in play as long as he isn't breaking the law. In his private moments on the sideline, who cares if he takes comfort in saying religious lines over and over to himself. Lots of people use self talk to mentally prepare themselves. I only care what an athlete does in his or her sport, or in his case, when the ball is in play. I actually applaud anyone who doesn't give in to people saying what you should or shouldn't do, whether it is praying, not praying, or trying to achieve a lifelong dream at an older age. So he prays, so others don't. Who cares... it is only a big deal to those who make it one. And his praying doesn't represent the Broncos as a Christian team anymore than people thought the Gators were when he played for UF. One player doesn't make a team.

Reply



Lisa

January 27, 2012

I couldn't disagree with you more. We love Tim Tebow and how he shares his faith. We hope and pray he never stops sharing his beliefs so openly.

Reply



Ginger

January 27, 2012

Brava for saying what a lot of us have been thinking for years. I am a sports fan. I will watch anything including curling. I suffered through Tebow and his John 3:16 "eyes" when he was at Florida. I was offended by his unnecessary displays of religion then as I am now. But this piece has me wondering why I am offended? I think it boils down to expectations. When I watch football I want to focus on football. I am a purist. Don't mix me up with religion when I am worried about first downs and touchdowns and quarterbacks down. If I want to watch church I will watch church. I think Alabama fans got it right when they photoshopped 32-12 in place of a scripture reference under Tebow's eyes. Just happened to be the score of the 2009 SEC CHampionship game when Bama dashed Florida's hopes for another National Championship. Tebow is a winner and a leader. Football Tim... Football.

Reply

Jewel

January 27, 2012



Diana, as a former Division I athlete and coach, I have been supremely impressed and inspired by your great journey! I continue to hope that you can try for that swim again and conquer it! With that said, I must speak out against you in this discussion.

[1 capture](#)
30 Jan 2012

You mention that Tebow is making a public spectacle of his beliefs. But isn't it the

media that makes a spectacle of it? And perhaps, bloggers such as yourself? You are drawing more attention to it, making it a spectacle. Tebow did not invent the after-game prayer. It has taken place for at least as many years as I have watched pro football. He is not the only athlete that points to the heavens after a TD. But the media makes him out as if he is the only one in the world to do these things. Yes, he is an athlete. Yes, the spotlight is on him. Yes, he believes in God and uses the spotlight to mention his Savior. But don't you do the same?

You are an athlete. You are in the spotlight. And you have used your spotlight experience to promote your belief in the homosexual lifestyle and political liberalism.

If you think he should stop the 'spectacle,' then you should as well. But I don't subscribe to that! This is America and we all have the right to do and say what we please as long as we don't break the law in doing so.

Let's leave Tebow alone...let him inspire the next generation of athletes with his hardwork and perserverence, just as you continue to do!

Reply



Carly

January 28, 2012

Hmmm you lost me at "homosexual lifestyle" I choose to be a Christian because I love Jesus I was born homosexual because that's the way God created me. God Bless

Reply



Anna

January 28, 2012

And that is true, Carly, I agree with you 100%. Even if the rest of the world hasn't caught up to that truth (sadly, but the tide is turning), it doesn't detract from Tebow's right to have his own set of beliefs that dictate his lifestyle.

Reply



Jewel

January 28, 2012

My statement was not to start a debate about homosexuality. I was trying to make the point that although their lifestyle is different, both Tebow and Diana use their time in the spotlight to promote their lifestyle. Hence, Diana telling Tebow to stop promoting his lifestyle is hypocritical if she

continues to promote hers. Sorry if I didn't convey that more clearly.

Reply

DEC JAN FEB
2011 2012 2013



About this capture

[1 capture](#)
30 Jan 2012



Anna

January 28, 2012

Well-stated, Jewel. I am a huge Diana fan, she is an amazing, inspirational woman, but it is a double-standard to want social justice and equality and not extend it to others, even Tebows. I think his behavior is especially harmless compared to say hate groups that also exercise free speech rights. It is appropriate to celebrate our diverse beliefs, and I respect Tebow for being so steadfast in a world of compromise, even if I'd consider it a bit over the top. Being judgemental of Tebow is still being judgemental, and we need to get away from such attitudes and instead move towards acceptance.

Reply



runnerkelly

January 27, 2012

As a believer, I think it is great to see. I totally agree with Beth! He isn't hurting anyone. Everyone has their own opinions and that is what makes this country great. What Tim is doing is not any different than the other guys who dance and make a spectacle of themselves when they make a great play. If he was putting bible verses under his eyes and people made a stink about that, I ask what's the difference with a tattoo? I follow you on all media sources and think you are a great athlete! Will I not follow you now because now I know you don't believe or make a fuss about Tim showing his beliefs in public (on his eyes or on the field)?? No, because we all have our own beliefs. God bless Tim and you

Reply



Mel

January 27, 2012

Hmmm... I read your post and I read the comments. I highlighted this phrase-But when he wears a uniform, he owes that team the respect of making his faith more private expression, less public spectacle.

This caught my eye. I am a Colorado native... all my life Bronco fan. The Tim Tebow show has gotten tedious... the media is so over covering it.

If Tim wants to point at the sky, point away. If he wants to sing on the sidelines, then sing away, I have the freedom to walk away from his singing, but when he brings it to the huddle and I need to hear the play called, I am being blasted with his beliefs in a place that I can't get away from them. I have to hear the play, I need to know what he is going to say. What if I was the QB and said Allah is Great or God is Dead or God does not exist each time I was QB to my huddle mates...? It doesn't belong somewhere where I cannot escape it.

If I don't want to hear him on TV reciting his beliefs on a church show or on a TV interview, then I can change the channel, however, when I tune into a game, leave it at pointing to the sky and praying with a group in private after the game.... Leave it out of the huddle Timmy.... please.

Thanks Diana for bringing a spotlight to this hyped up topic.

Individual beliefs are just that. IF you preach something on here that I don't like, I

don't have to read. But if I am watching a game on TV and you are the commentator and you bring your beliefs to the show that are totally unrelated to the show, then I take issue. Tim is doing just that... he is making my Denver

Bronco football game into a revival...

Just let me watch my football...Can I get an Amen?! 😊

Reply



Natalie

well said.

January 27, 2012

Reply



Shirley

AMEN

January 28, 2012

Reply



George Dickerson

It's an interesting point of view and you raise some good points. I have many problems with religion in general. The biggest ones being the roles (or lack of) for women, views on homosexuality, and a belief that XYZ religion is the only one. While this does not apply to all religions, many religions share some of these common beliefs.

So whenever I see someone trying to promote religious values, it makes me uncomfortable. On the other hand when folks use their celebrity to promote things I believe in, I guess I am all for it.

So here is the question. Is the problem that Tim Tebow uses his views to promote his religion, or that Tim Tebow's religion is something that makes us uncomfortable?

January 28, 2012

Reply



Vicki

Amen, sisters!

January 27, 2012

Reply

Tony LaMantia

Ms. Nyad,

Your accomplishments as an athlete and role model are very admirable.

But I am confused as to why you feel the need to condemn Tim Tebow and his

January 27, 2012

[1 capture](#)
30 Jan 2012

effect on his team and team mates. I have heard no negativity about his faith by his team mates, and in this day and age of social media madness I think it would be safe to say someone would have spoken out. But you chose denigrate his actions by doing nothing more than giving uninformed speculation. You ask 'What if Congress would take a knee and pray after each session?' Are you aware that Congress starts out each session with a prayer? Or that both Houses of Congress have their own Chaplain? Obviously not. Its amazing that someone such as yourself who is uninformed and ignorant on subject would chose to speak out on it in such a public forum as Twitter and the Huffington Post. Your bigotry and prejudice towards Christianity is repulsive and reprehensible.

Reply



Kim

January 27, 2012

Why are atheists so thin skinned? We Christians put up with the repulsive display of secular filth in the world every day. Maybe you should self reflect on why Christianity pushes your buttons to the point that you need to "rail against" someone displaying it. You might also consider getting to know the one who walked on water and calmed the sea before you attempt Cuba to Florida again.

Reply



Lisa

January 28, 2012

Well said Kim.

Reply



Mike

January 27, 2012

The irony here is this: You accuse Tebow of using his public platform to sell his religious beliefs, but how is that different than you trying to sell products off your swimming adventures? Duhhh.

Reply



Sandy Linton

January 27, 2012

Totally, totally, totally agree with you! Thank you for saying it so eloquently.

Reply



Joanne

January 28, 2012

Freedom FROM religion is just as important as freedom OF religion. The same people who feel totally entitled to expect me to bow my head for their Grace at table are the ones who give the biggest eye-rolls when I express gratitude to my own gods. MY religion is just as worthy as theirs, but I don't seek to impose any of my rules on anyone else. "Christians" have been making me very uncomfortable for well over sixty years, and it doesn't seem to be winning me over as a convert.

Reply



Steve Schatz

January 28, 2012

Freedom of religion is the opposite of freedom from religion.

Reply

[1 capture](#)
30 Jan 2012

Skeldaddy

Matthew 6:6

January 28, 2012

Reply

Jim

This discussion demonstrates the beauty of the USA. Just remember that you do not and should not have the right to not be offended! Too bad if Tim, or the media, or Diana, or the Broncos, or whoever, has offended you. If you don't like it, don't watch – vote with your feet like a good capitalist.

January 28, 2012

Reply



Lisa

Tim Teebow is a wonderful person through and through. The bible teaches people to share Christianity. It's Gods will. If you don't like it... don't pay attention. It's as simple as that. This post says a lot about your character Diana. I never heard of you before reading this article. Nice of you to put someone down to lift yourself up.. something Tim Teebow would never do.

January 28, 2012

Reply



Jean S.

Well said! Tebow's gotten away "with murder" for sure regardless of how athletic he is! And yes, what if he was advertising a different faith? He would have been run out on a rail.

As a former elementary educator, I have to share that I also add to the "Pledge of the Allegiance" right after the kids say 'with liberty and justice for.....' JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY instead of the standard 'with liberty and justice for all.' I learned that from an African American colleague who had quietly been stating that phrase since her teenage years.

January 28, 2012

Reply



Lisa

"with murder" ??? hmmm. This haa got to be the most ridiculous comment ever. And you were a former elementary educator.

January 28, 2012

Reply



laura wilson

January 29, 2012

I would take one Tim Tebow over 1000 Barry Bonds. What he does to get ready

for a game and to celebrate afterward is his own business. If he were of a current "cool groovy now" faith, maybe you would like it. He feels he must bow when he

God. Many many people prayed for you while you were on your last swim, including myself. So just loosen up and let him be himself. You gave other things to give your time to that are more important. P.S. I will still pray for your safety in your next swim; am excited for you.

Reply



Steve

January 29, 2012

Just read Diana's comments regarding Tim Tebow's outward showing of his faith.

Consider that you have your opinion on whether he should or should not show his faith in God. This is America where we all have that right. However, he has the same right that you have and should be respected for it. If you do not like his showing his strong faith in God, just simply turn the TV off. Remember, he feels as strong about his God as you feel about your opinion.

Reply

WiltStilt

January 29, 2012

I just saw a "Teditalk" clip on YouTube of Dyana talking about turning 60 and wondering outloud about (paraphrasing) "what have I done with my life" that is worthwhile considering we only have a few years (relatively) to go. I think a lot of us ask the same question(s) even before we are 60.

I would submit that Tim Tebow and those of us who have had the Lord come into our lives have an answer for ourselves to that question: serving the one for forgave us and fixed our broken insides and outsides gives us something that is eternally worthwhile. Something that will not pass when we leave this world.

Please forgive us where we have rubbed you (plural, collectively to all who read this) the wrong way, but we love Him for what He has done for us. We don't want to force feed Him to anyone – we don't like things stuffed down our throats – but we want to talk about the one who is the best thing that ever happened to us.

Reply

Leave a Comment

Name

Mail (will not be published)

Website

Your message...

[1 capture](#)

30 Jan 2012

DEC

JAN

FEB



30



2011

2012

2013



▼ About this capture

Submit

Diana Nyad's Xtreme Dream

"Diana is more than a swimmer. She's a beacon of hope to us all that we can dream big, live life large, and look back at all of it with no regrets whatsoever."

Recent Posts

- Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport
- TEDMED
- It's Never Too Late
- Tragic News Has Arrived
- Let Freedom Ring

Recent Comments

- WiltStilt on Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport
- Steve on Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport
- laura wilson on Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport
- Jewel on Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport
- Anna on Tim Tebow: Separation of Church and Sport

Archives

- January 2012 (8)
- December 2011 (7)
- November 2011 (1)
- October 2011 (17)
- September 2011 (43)
- August 2011 (36)
- July 2011 (20)
- June 2011 (11)
- May 2011 (15)
- April 2011 (4)
- March 2011 (2)
- February 2011 (1)
- January 2011 (2)
- October 2010 (3)
- September 2010 (7)
- August 2010 (14)
- July 2010 (13)

Xtreme Dream. For Diana Nyad's representation please contact Pam Derderian

[1 capture](#)
30 Jan 2012



▼ About this capture