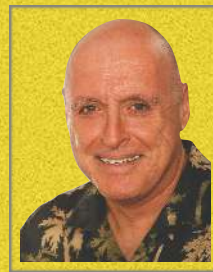


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



683 Fairness Makes Everything Simpler

What does tonight's presidential debate, general business practice, and kids' baseball got in common? I'm Jerry Roberts and that element shall be revealed, next, on The Extra Point.

When I was a kid I played baseball, little league and junior league. There was a rule that every kid who signed up to play had to get into each game, play two innings in the field and get up to bat once.

It was sometimes an inconvenient rule, and it wasn't uncommon for these reserve players to make errors that resulted in their team losing games. But they got to play because the game and sportsmanship were more important than who won. Of course we cared who won, but even as youngsters we understood that each player needed that fair chance to compete. Fairness is the foundation of sports.

In business, people fight hard to win market share and sometimes say things about their competition, hoping to sway the opinion of potential buyers against the other guy's offer, and swing them over to theirs.

Oh, they don't say horrible things about the competitor, but maybe they twist the facts a little. Maybe they say a few things they know aren't true, but doesn't everybody do that? I mean, the customer won't really know the difference, right?

Customers don't like to be lied to. Customers also aren't interested in the snarky things you might have to say about your competitors' products and services, or lack of support, or any other effort you might make to paint the other guy in a bad light. They know why you're doing it — to get their money — and it's not appreciated. Doing that kind of thing violates the basic rules of...fairness, and most people don't like it.

Donald Trump and Joe Biden square off in their

second and final debate tonight. Among the topics that won't be discussed is foreign policy, even though that was agreed upon by all parties. It was removed yesterday because there is a growing story about a possible scandal, one that revolves around Biden's son Hunter, and him allegedly selling influence to the Russians and Chinese — that he'd provide introductions to high-ranking U.S. officials. Obviously, that would include his father, the vice-president.

If we believe in fairness we say that Biden and his son are innocent until proven guilty. But the issue of fairness doesn't end there.

Mainstream media has refused to go with the story. Media that routinely reports accusations anything negative against Trump, will not tell its followers that there are allegations of major wrongdoing by Biden's son, and possibly Biden himself.

Social media has done the same. Their bias has become painstakingly clear. Look, if you want to hate Trump, that's up to you. He's not my cup of tea as a president; and neither is Biden. The negatives for both men are higher than anyone should be comfortable with. That said, the worst thing is not the candidates, it's the media that has taken sides and no longer can be trusted to deliver unbiased information.

When I grew up, people in the news gave you the facts. Editorials and news were separate, and didn't get mixed together, unlike today. People in the news business understood there were lines you did not cross, because fairness would come into question.

This election doesn't look like any election we've ever seen. It's not just the media changing the rules to give favor to one candidate over another, it's also about changing the rules of casting votes.

(Con't.)

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The whole idea of mail-in ballots brings up the potential for fraud, and we've already seen stories that indicate such problems. How much fraud? Nobody knows, but how much are you willing to accept?

Even though the vast majority of us in Guam don't have the privilege of voting for president, don't you still want the process to be fair?

To the supporters of both candidates, I would ask this: If you knew that operatives in your party had used various means to cheat in order to win the election, would you be okay with that? As long as your guy wins, cheating is okay?

I hope you sense that's not a political question, it's a character question.

Over the years we've seen numerous scams that ripped off investors to the tune of billions of dollars. We didn't like it, as it went against our code of fairness.

In 2017, the Houston Astros cheated their way to a World Series win over the Los Angeles Dodgers. Legit Astros fans, plus all other baseball lovers, were horrified and angered. It violated their sense of fairness.

And now, our cherished system of electing the president is threatened, and partisanship has clouded the vision of both sides, to the point that political advantage is all that matters. The issue of fairness is kicked to the curb.

This election is not just about Trump vs. Biden, or the Democrats vs. the Republicans. It's about us. America is divided like never before, and we've allowed it to divide us. We've allowed the players to play us, and play us they have.

So, in the end, is it about any means to an end, so long as we get the result we want, or is it about fairness — even if the we don't come out with the win?

Like I said, it's a character question, one that we all need to face.

Because, you see, once we are willing to cash in the fundamental rule of fairness, or apply it only when it suits our purpose, we've lost more than we can ever imagine.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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