

## You Are Not On the Bubble

The NCAA Tournament brackets will be announced this weekend. College basketball teams have completed the regular season and conference tournaments, with the goal of earning a spot in the “big dance.” One of the most frequently talked about terms was “the bubble.” TV analysts have started talking about teams who were “on the bubble” as early as December. The bubble is a sports term for teams hanging onto the hope of being chosen but, because of their record, they are in a precarious position. By February, we started hearing the terms “last four in” or “first four out” as a warning that a team’s performance wasn’t measuring up, compared to other teams around the country. Selection Sunday is here, and for some, the bubble will burst today.



The Selection Committee considers various statistical metrics to determine which teams have earned their spots in the tournament. However, it still becomes a judgment call, and many teams will feel they got the “short end” of the deal if their name isn’t called on Sunday night. Teams on the outside, looking in, try to justify why they were better than those who were chosen.

There is a much bigger party than basketball’s annual “big dance.” The party is in Heaven and is available to all believers. There is no bubble. You don’t have to earn your spot with “Quad 1” wins or by avoiding “bad losses.” Thanks to Jesus’ resurrection, your participation can be assured. Even when we mess up (“bad losses”), we are forgiven if we repent of our sins. Toss the metrics aside because no one is worthy. Thankfully, God doesn’t keep a record of bad losses. *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)*. It just comes down to your profession of faith.

God also doesn’t need a Selection Committee. He doesn’t compare your life to the performance of others. It is not about what *you* did with your life but what *Jesus* did. The only qualification is to profess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5)*.

There is an insurance company that frequently advertises during college basketball game broadcasts. The commercial touts that you can join (they call it being “a member”) if you, or a relative, served in the United States armed forces. One person in the commercial wonders if they can become insured by the company, while the second person replies, “I am already in.” We, too, can know that we’re “already in” because of our faith. There is no bubble nor uncertainty.

You have a choice. Selection Sunday is coming. Whom do we serve?

**Question:** Are you already in?

**Prayer:** Dear Lord. I commit my life to You, living by faith, and thankful for the forgiveness of my sins that You so freely give. Amen.

*Other Verses:*

- *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8).*
- *They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” (Acts 16:31)*
- *If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:9).*