

FIFA - World's Largest Religious Gathering

In the world of mass gatherings; attendance is the most important thing. It all comes down to this; more people mean more money. More people mean more political clout. More people mean more prestige. Every group, organisation, church etc. boast of their attendance figures. The bigger the crowd, the more successful the event is.

What happens when an event is so big, that people are clamouring all over the world to get there? Arenas are only so big. Most people don't have the thousands of dollars needed to get there. But the ones who are able to be there; have lots of money to throw around. That tends to attract the darker side of humanity, the scam artists and prostitutes, to relieve the gullible of their extra cash.

Those die-hard fanatics who can't get there; will attend through modern technology. They can participate in real-time; experiencing the highs and lows of the moment. People no longer have to be at home to watch. The smartphones etc. allow them to tune in, almost anywhere on the planet. Therefore, it is not surprising to find not millions, but billions involved.

To-day hosts one of those events. It is so huge in popularity; that it rivals the Olympics. That would be FIFA, and the final championship game. Almost half the world's population will be viewing. Some have even lost their lives when watching in Kenya, by terrorists. What makes these events so important, that people are willing to risk their lives?

These events seem to take on a religious atmosphere. The fans, the fanatics, and the devotees have to be involved. They have to be there, and on time. They are part of the rituals; the

opening ceremony, the intermission shows, and the closing ceremony. They have their chants, like the Maori war dance. They invoke spiritual help; by burying a lucky coin in the ice, or doing the wave. And they pay lots of money for that. Does it accomplish anything else but take their minds off the problems and pressures of the day? Does it make anyone any better because of participating in it? Does the feel good sensation, for the winners, improve their lives? Do the losers take out their frustrations by rioting and anarchy?

These kinds of events have been around for thousands of years. Then it was the Circus at Rome. The masses couldn't get enough of the blood-letting that went on in the arena. It wasn't only animals that were killed. Many people were too. In fact, most of them were Christians. When they would not worship Caesar, and deny the Son of the Living God, Our Lord Jesus Christ; they were literally thrown to the lions.

The Christians were persecuted, as was Our Lord Jesus Christ. I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments,

you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause. But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. (John 15:1-27)

No matter what happens; God is still in control. He sent His Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ down here to Shed His Blood, and pay the penalty for our sins. Our Lord Jesus Christ has advice for everyone. Do not marvel that I said to you, You must be born again. (John 3:7)

He still wants you to spend Eternity with Him, and His Heavenly Father. Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

And he brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? So they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household. (Acts 16:30-31)

For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. (Romans 10:13)

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