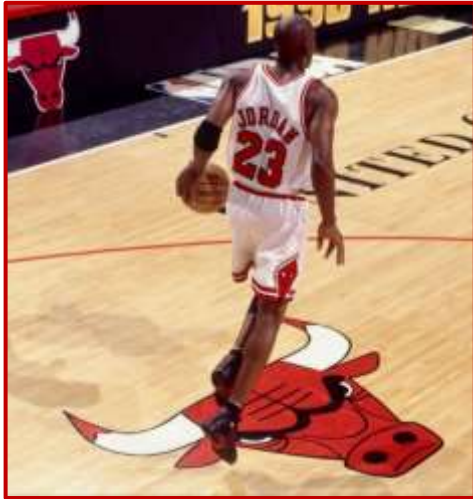


# Michael Jordan's Gift



During the years of his amazing basketball career, Michael Jordan won countless games.

Many things drove him to victory over the course of those years: love of the game, love of competition, love of the financial reward, even love of the glory. He was not selfish, though, in his pursuit of the glory.

In 1997, the Chicago Bulls were making a run for their fifth NBA championship. That same year, Frank Hamblen, an assistant coach with more than 25 years' experience, joined the Bulls staff. Hamblen had been on the staffs of several teams, but never on one that went the distance.

"He's been around the league for so long, on a lot of teams, and made some great contributions, and then not to be on a championship team," Jordan said. "That will be my gift to Hamblen. That's part of my motivation."

Hamblen recalled a special conversation Jordan had with him. "Michael came to me early in the season and told me it was a big motivation for him to win so that I can get a ring. When the best basketball player in the whole world tells you that, well, it certainly made me feel special."

That year, Hamblen got his ring, and shared in Michael's glory.

There is a spiritual application to this story.

Jesus came into the world to win the fight for the salvation of men and women. His motivation? So that we might share His glory!



The reward for us as believers in Him is far more than a championship ring. We get to go to His Father's heaven, to a mansion He has prepared for us, and experience the joy of eternal salvation with our Lord.

Women appeared at the tomb after Jesus' crucifixion, and an angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said" (Matthew 28:5-6 NKJV).

*Death is swallowed up in victory* (1 Corinthians 15:54 NKJV).

*In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the Pioneer of their salvation perfect through what He suffered* (Hebrews 2:10 NIV).