

Sending the Sign

In his book, *How Life Imitates the World Series*, Dave Bosewell tells a story about Earl Weaver, former manager of the Baltimore Orioles. Sports fans, like myself, will enjoy how he handled star Reggie Jackson.

Weaver had a rule that no one could steal a base unless given the steal sign. This upset Jackson because he felt he knew the pitchers and catchers well enough to judge who he could and could not steal off of. So, one game he decided to steal without a sign. He got a good jump off the pitcher and easily beat the throw to second base. As he shook the dirt off his uniform, Jackson smiled with delight, feeling he had vindicated his judgment to his manager.

Later, Weaver took Jackson aside and explained why he hadn't given the steal sign. First, the next batter was Lee May, his best power hitter other than Jackson. When Jackson stole second, first base was left open, so the other team walked May intentionally, taking the bat out of his hands.

Second, the following batter had not been strong against that pitcher, so Weaver felt he had to send up a pinch hitter to try to drive in the men on base. That left Weaver without bench strength later in the game when he needed it.

The problem was that Jackson saw only his relationship to the pitcher and catcher. Weaver was watching the whole game.

In the centers of Life Care and American Lifestyles, we may know the associates with whom we work and the residents we serve, and those relationships are very important. Those responsible for leadership, including the director of nursing and the executive director or general manager, must see the whole picture.

In the spiritual sense, we, too, can see only so far, but God is in charge of the big picture. When He sends us a signal, it is wise to obey, no matter what we may think we know.

--Beecher Hunter