

# Tebow Will Start for Broncos in 2012

Dear Teacher,

Whether you are a football fan or not, you probably know about Tim Tebow. He's the Denver Broncos quarterback who has been very outspoken about his faith in Jesus and who is known for kneeling in prayer on the football field during games -- to the point that his signature prayer pose has been widely copied and mimicked, praised and ridiculed. His willingness to publicly and unapologetically witness about his faith has led some to debate how and when Christians should witness that plainly and that openly. It has also led a significant number of people to conclude that some of his accomplishments on the field can be attributed to divine intervention. Further, at least one observer has credited Tebow's upbringing for his willingness to be open about his faith today.

So for this installment of *The Wired Word*, we will consider matters of public witnessing, of whether God indeed might reward such witnessing with divine help in one's endeavors and of the impact the faith of parents may have on their children.

Remember, if you wish to provide your class members with an abbreviated copy of the lesson, [click here](#), and you can send them a copy via e-mail today.

May God bless you as you teach the Scriptures this week.

The Editorial Team of *The Wired Word*



## Tebow Will Start for Broncos in 2012

*The Wired Word* for January 22, 2012

### In the News

On Monday, Denver Broncos boss John Elway announced that Tim Tebow will be the team's starting quarterback going into training camp for the 2012 season.

While Tebow's performance on the field has been uneven, his quarterbacking helped the Broncos reach their first playoff berth since 2005. The Broncos lost that game to the New England Patriots, but Elway is impressed enough with Tebow's work to declare him the starter and pledge to personally work with him to polish his passing game and help him become a better quarterback.

"I think he made some good strides this year," Elway said. "He obviously played very well against Pittsburgh and played very well in a lot of football games."

Tebow did less well in some other games. He completed just 46.5 percent of his passes in the regular season and 40.5 percent in the playoffs. Still, Elway sees plenty of promise and a willing pupil in Tebow.

Quite aside from his stats, Tebow, whose parents were missionaries in the Philippines, has become widely known for his profession of faith in Jesus. He has proclaimed that faith publicly by such means as etching "John 3:16" in the black swash painted below his eyes during games, by tweeting Bible verses to his million-plus followers, by stating that he was thanking his "Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" following a Broncos victory over the Steelers in the playoff, and especially by his kneeling prayer-pose on the field. This pose, dubbed "Tebowing," has been widely copied and mimicked. Some have praised Tebow for his willingness to pray openly; others have ridiculed him for doing so.

In one recent case, following a high school basketball match between two South Carolina high schools, two fans of the victorious side were reportedly beaten severely by opposition supporters for “Tebowing.” (See [High School Basketball Players Beaten for “Tebowing.” Fox News.](#))

The very public-ness of Tebow’s faith-profession has caused discussion in some quarters about how and under what circumstances Christians should openly declare their faith and show themselves obviously to be praying.

Whatever the answer to that, some 43 percent of the people surveyed recently by the website Poll Position said they believe that God plays a role in the NFL quarterback’s success on the field.

More on this story can be found at these links:

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[Kurt Warner on Tebow and Faith in Football. Fox Business](#) (video)

[Broncos’ Tim Tebow Completely Cool with “Tebowing.” Denver Post](#)

[Tim Tebow and John 3:16. Washington Times](#)

## The Big Questions

1. Does a person’s public display of religious behavior mean that the person is a devout believer? How do we know?
2. When one is the center of attention at a secular venue where viewers come from various faith backgrounds and some do not believe in God at all, is it appropriate to show that one is praying? Why or why not? Is Tebow’s praying on the field any different from a Christian bowing for prayer before eating a meal in a restaurant? If so, different in what way?
3. Would God actually help a player’s on-field performance because of the player’s public testimony? Assuming that none of us can claim to truly know the mind of God, how likely is it, considering the depth of the world’s problems, that God takes a hand in athletic events? If God is taking the part of athletes who confess Christ, why aren’t the same victories, or even the same level of safety and security, granted to missionaries, doctors, aid workers and others who live in danger, are kidnapped or get killed while serving humanity in the name of Christ?
4. In what ways is the kingdom of God advanced by the public testimony of famous people? What negative effect might such public testimony have?
5. At least one observer has credited Tebow’s parents for instilling the Christian faith in their son though “grace-based parenting” (see [Raising Tebow. OneNewsNow](#)). No doubt their parenting did play a significant role, but that observer goes on to say, “Any parent of faith can see that kind of same response from their kids if they create a culture of grace in their home -- and raise [them] with all the truth and all the rules and regulations of normal Christianity there, but all done with the spirit of a heart connection.” Do you agree with that? What about Christian homes where one child grows up to be a firm believer and another, with the same parenting, grows up to be a nonbeliever? Or where one chooses a life of service to others, another chooses a life of service to self and another chooses a life of crime?

## Confronting the News with Scripture

Here are some Bible verses to guide your discussion:

**Matthew 6:6**

*“But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”* (For context, read 6:1-18.)

Jesus made this statement in his Sermon on the Mount to warn his followers away from hypocritical religious behavior. Critics of “Tebowing” have sometimes pointed to this verse, suggesting that the football player is violating the principle Jesus himself stated.

In context, however, Jesus was not telling people to avoid public praying per se. The context verses show that Jesus was talking about the *motives* behind going public with one’s religious practices, including charitable acts (vv. 2-4), praying (vv. 5-15) and fasting (vv. 16-18). Jesus was objecting to the then common self-regarding practice in his culture of *appearing* pious to impress people and promote one’s status and reputation. He was calling for true religion: acts of charity and piety motivated by a desire to help others and serve God.

By giving to others anonymously (v. 3), praying privately (v. 6) and fasting without calling attention to it (v. 17), we avoid the temptation to say (or think), “Look how holy I am!”

**Questions:** In light of this passage, would you say more of us who follow Jesus should be giving unsolicited testimonies of faith in public? Why or why not? What stops most of us from making such public testimonies?

**Matthew 7:21**

*“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.”* (For context, read 7:15-27.)

This is also from the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is saying that a profession of faith alone is not sufficient to “enter the kingdom of heaven.” Actually *doing* the will of God is required.

Preceding this statement, Jesus used a metaphor about good trees producing good fruit and said that a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. He was talking about false prophets, but his conclusion, that “you will know them by their fruits” (v. 20), applies broadly to all of us. In fact, Jesus applies it to all who profess faith in him when he next makes the “Lord, Lord” statement above.

**Questions:** What do you do to connect your words and your deeds? Are you aware of some public figures, such as athletes, actors or politicians, who regularly perform similar acts out of the limelight, and whose deeds are only known because others reveal them? Does publicizing charitable acts encourage others to practice charity?

**Matthew 5:14-16**

*“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”* (For context, read 5:13-16.)

Here’s one more from the Sermon on the Mount. Note how Jesus connects shining light and good works.

ESPN commentator Rick Reilly wrote, “I’ve come to believe in Tim Tebow ... not for what he does on a football field, which is still three parts Dr. Jekyll and two parts Mr. Hyde ... [but] for what he does off a football field, which is represent the best parts of us, the parts I want to be and so rarely am.” Reilly goes on to say, “Every week, Tebow picks out someone who is suffering, or who is dying, or who is injured. He flies these people and their families to the Broncos game, rents them a car, puts them up in a nice hotel, buys

them dinner (usually at a Dave & Buster's), gets them and their families pregame passes, visits with them just before kickoff (!), gets them 30-yard-line tickets down low, visits with them after the game (sometimes for an hour), has them walk him to his car, and sends them off with a basket of gifts. [And he does this] home or road, win or lose, hero or goat." (For the full article, see [I Believe in Tim Tebow. ESPN.](#))

Reilly seems to have become a believer in Tebow because of the quarterback's good works. We don't know if that has caused Reilly to "give glory to [the] Father in heaven," but he apparently at least respects what motivates Tebow. And it has made Reilly aware that he doesn't do enough good works himself ("... the parts I want to be and so rarely am.")

**Questions:** How do you work to bring the best part yourself to the front when dealing with others? Do the good works of others inspire you to undertake some yourself?

## **2 Timothy 1:5**

*"I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you."* (For context, read 1:3-14.)

The apostle Paul wrote the words above to his coworker Timothy. He seems to say that in a sense, Timothy "inherited" his Christian faith from his mother and grandmother, but it's more likely he means that Timothy learned his faith from them, but made his own commitment to it.

In any case, this verse should not be read as a promise. The Bible is not suggesting that all children of faithful Christian parents will necessarily commit to that faith themselves. In fact, we know that many do not. Nonetheless, the home is one place where the faith is learned, and many children do get their prolonged exposure to it there. And some embrace it for themselves.

**Questions:** We all know of people who live grace-filled lives despite having grown up with bad parents, and wonderful parents whose children have made bad choices. Are there any guarantees when it comes to raising children? What part does free will play? What part does nature (genetics) play? What part does nurture play?

## **2 Timothy 1:8**

*"Do not be ashamed then, of the testimony about our Lord ... but join with me in suffering for the gospel ..."* (For context, read 1:3-14.)

This verse is a continuation of the comments Paul made to Timothy about the faith of his mother and grandmother (which is why we've indicated the same context verses). From the words here we see that Paul certainly supports the idea of public witnessing about Christ, but he has no illusions that such testimony will be rewarded by an easy life -- or success in the "game."

**Question:** What message do you take for yourself from Paul's words about unashamed testimony and suffering?

## **1 Peter 4:12-13**

*"Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed."* (For context, read 4:12-19.)

It's not certain to what "fiery ordeal" Peter was referring here, but clearly something difficult was happening to the Christians he was addressing in this biblical letter. It could have been all-out persecution, but it may have been simply harassment or ridicule on a smaller scale for professing faith in Christ. In any case, Peter makes no promises of game-scoring points or life-easing rewards for holding to the faith. Rather he speaks of "sharing in Christ's sufferings."

**Question:** What do you say about great athletes who follow Jesus but never win a championship or become hall-of-famers?

### For Further Discussion

1. Comment on this, from a *Wired Word* team member: “It looks like [Tebow’s] on-field demonstrations of his faith play well to the media and the fans. His post-game and off-field work touches lives. Much as I do not care for the face painting or the ‘Tebowing,’ I am reminded of what Dwight L. Moody said to his critics: ‘I like what I am doing better than what you are not doing.’”
2. Respond to this: Writing about Tebow in *USA Today*, Robert Klemko said, “America’s newest favorite athlete, according to a new ESPN poll, might have a platform for his beliefs, but his left arm does all the talking.”
3. One *Wired Word* team member commented, “I am always hearing people in the restaurant or the store saying things like, ‘So and so is a real Christian’ or ‘That one is a real Christian,’ when speaking of this [professional sports] player or that. How do they know?” How indeed?
4. Discuss this, which is a team-member response to the praise for Tebow’s Christian upbringing in [Raising Tebow. OneNewsNow](#): “Beware of making Tebow into some sort of Christian trophy for parenting. The phrase in that [article], ‘He is the logical conclusion of conscientious, grace-based parenting -- that’s just the way they turn out,’ is insulting to Christian parents who have been conscientious, worked to be grace-based in their parenting and allow children to choose how they will live and who they will be as adults, only to have their children leave the church or become indifferent. ... The clear message is that if a child does not become a Tebow, it is because the parents failed to provide the proper parenting. That is wrong theology, and bad spiritual counsel.”
5. Do you make any regular public displays of your faith? Do you offer grace before meals in public restaurants? How do people react to you? How do you react toward the public displays of faith of others?

### Responding to the News

This is a good time to think about the ways you witness to your faith, and how you might, under the right circumstances, be more forthright about it -- both in deed and in word.

### Closing Prayer

O God, help us to be good and faithful witnesses for our faith in Jesus. Give us wisdom to know when and how to speak about it, when and how to act on it and when and how to do both, and then give us the courage to follow through. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

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*So for our next class, we will consider matters of public witnessing, of whether God indeed might reward such witnessing with divine help in one's endeavors and of the impact the faith of parents may have on their children.*

*If you wish to start thinking about our topic in advance, below is some introductory material.*



## **Tebow Will Start for Broncos in 2012**

*The Wired Word for January 22, 2012*

### **In the News**

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## The Big Questions

*Here are some of the questions we will discuss in class:*

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## Confronting the News with Scripture

*We will look at selected verses from these Scripture texts. You may wish to read these in advance for*

*background:*

Matthew 6:1-18

Matthew 7:15-27

Matthew 5:13-16

2 Timothy 1:3-14

1 Peter 4:12-19

*In class, we will talk about these passages and look for some insight on the big questions, as well as talk about other questions you may have about this topic. Please join us.*

## Scriptures for The Wired Word Online Bible Study for January 22, 2012

### Matthew 6:1-18

<sup>6</sup>“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>6</sup>But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>7</sup>“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

<sup>9</sup>“Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. <sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup>And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup>And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. <sup>14</sup>For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; <sup>15</sup>but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

<sup>16</sup>“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.

<sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

### Matthew 7:15-27

<sup>15</sup>“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup>You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup>In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup>Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup>Thus you will know them by their fruits.

<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. <sup>22</sup>On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?’ <sup>23</sup>Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers.’ <sup>24</sup>“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. <sup>25</sup>The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. <sup>26</sup>And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup>The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”

## **Matthew 5:13-16**

<sup>13</sup>“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. <sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup>No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

## **2 Timothy 1:3-14**

<sup>3</sup>I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. <sup>4</sup>Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. <sup>5</sup>I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you.

<sup>6</sup>For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; <sup>7</sup>for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. <sup>8</sup>Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, <sup>9</sup>who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, <sup>10</sup>but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. <sup>11</sup>For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, <sup>12</sup>and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. <sup>13</sup>Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup>Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

## **1 Peter 4:12-19**

<sup>12</sup>Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup>But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. <sup>14</sup>If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. <sup>15</sup>But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief maker. <sup>16</sup>Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name. <sup>17</sup>For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? <sup>18</sup>And "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinners?" <sup>19</sup>Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good.

## Tebow earns starting status for 2012

Updated Jan 17, 2012 2:35 AM ET

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ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)

The debate over Tim Tebow's worthiness as an NFL quarterback will undeniably continue in the offseason.

What's not in doubt is his status as the Denver Broncos' starter.

Can't get enough Tebow? Then hang out here.

The team sought to curb the circus that's sure to surround Tebow over the next several months by declaring him the incumbent at a season-ending news conference Monday.

"Well, I think Tim's earned the right to be the starting quarterback going into training camp next year," Broncos boss John Elway declared at the beginning of a 40-minute news conference in which 24 of the 47 questions were about Tebow.

"I think he made some good strides this year," Elway said. "He obviously played very well against Pittsburgh and played very well in a lot of football games."

And exceedingly poorly in plenty of others.

That's why Elway, a Hall of Famer who rejoined the team a year ago as chief of football operations, has pledged to personally work with Tebow this offseason to polish his passing game and help him become a better quarterback.

He has a willing pupil in Tebow, who said his offseason goal was "to work pretty hard and try to get a lot better."

Elway said he wants to "help Tim in every way I can, to be able to improve through what I learned."

And that was this: Mobility is great, but to compete for a championship, you have to become a pocket passer. That's what Elway learned late in his career, which he capped with back-to-back Super Bowl titles after losing the big game three times.



Even celebrities have ripped off Tim Tebow's signature move.

The Broncos, like everyone else, are looking for that franchise quarterback "and we're so hopeful that Tim's that guy. Obviously, we have some work to do and he knows that, too."

Tebow took over a 1-4 team in October and guided the Broncos to their first playoff berth since 2005. But the clunky dual-threat quarterback completed just 46.5 percent of his passes in the regular season and 40.4 percent in the playoffs while compiling an 8-5 overall record that included five second-half comebacks.

His 80-yard TD toss on the first play of overtime beat Pittsburgh in the wild-card round and capped his best performance as a pro.

Then, he had the worst completion percentage - 34 - in a playoff game since 1998 in a 35-point loss at New England on Saturday night in a game that showed how far both he and the Broncos have yet to go.

Sticking with Tebow as the starter doesn't mean the Broncos won't be adding a quarterback or two in the offseason either through the draft or free agency.

"Well, right now as we look at it, we've got two quarterbacks under contract," Elway said, noting that practice squad QB Adam Weber signed a futures contract. "So, we've obviously got to be in the market to find some more quarterbacks."

Coach John Fox didn't rule out the return of Brady Quinn, who hasn't taken a single snap in his two seasons in Denver.

Selling a veteran quarterback on Denver might be difficult.

Take a look at the Denver quarterback's work on the field during his big season.

"Now, I think that anybody that comes in, a free agent, no matter what position, is going to believe they're going to come in and have a chance to compete," Elway said. "That's the thing. Anybody that comes in here, when we start training camp, is going to be competing for jobs. Obviously, with Tim's reputation, if the guy is afraid to come in here and compete for that job, then maybe it's not the right guy."

With Tebow entering his first camp as the unquestioned starter, it's likely the Broncos will seek out a veteran backup via free agency, but Elway said he wasn't sure whether the team would look at QBs who are stylistically similar to Tebow.

Tebow's growth was stunted by the NFL lockout and Kyle Orton's status as the starter through training camp and the first month of the season.

Despite winning seven of his first eight starts, the Broncos were unbalanced under Tebow. They had the league's best ground game but were ranked 31st in the 32-team league in passing.

"So, those are the strides that we're going to have to make for us to be the offensive football team that we want to be," Elway said. "And so that's why we're looking forward to this offseason and we know what kind of mentality Timmy has, he's a great worker and I know he'll work his tail off this offseason. ... I think he will make those improvements."

Fox said he wasn't worried that Tebow's many off-the-field commitments would detract from working on his faulty footwork and messy mechanics. He said all the players deserve a break from football.

He also said the read-option he installed midseason to capitalize on Tebow's unique skills served as a bridge to his becoming a conventional quarterback but might remain a part of the Broncos' arsenal in 2012.

The Broncos' brass like the way Tebow handled pressure in his first season as the starter. Elway said what he went through in his career in this quarterback-crazed town was nothing compared to what Tebow has to endure.

Elway said his scrutiny was mostly local, "but when you look at Tim Tebow, what he went through was nationally based or maybe even worldwide-based. I mean, you talk about people Tebowing

outside the Eiffel Tower, you know, that kind of tells you."

Still, Elway said Tebow was unaffected by all the attention.

As for Elway, he said he enjoyed his first year as an NFL executive even as he was lambasted on Twitter by Tebow's legion of fans after showing tepid enthusiasm for the second-year quarterback early on.

"Yeah, I want to keep doing it, no question," Elway said. "There's no question, we had some tough situations this year, obviously with the quarterback situation, where we were coming into camp, even coming out of camp, but I think for the most part I enjoyed that."

He said what he's proudest about "is the bandwagon is now full again. That thing was pretty empty last year."

The Broncos could lose the architect of Tebow's game plans if offensive coordinator Mike McCoy leaves. He interviewed for the Miami Dolphins' head coaching vacancy Monday and will also interview with the Oakland Raiders, as will Denver defensive coordinator Dennis Allen.

Calling the Broncos "a work in progress," Fox said his message to his players at their final team meeting Sunday was that there will be plenty of changes in 2012 because "we would do whatever it takes to win the big boy championship, not just the AFC West championship."



ESPN.com: AFC West

[\[Print without images\]](#)**ESPN**

Sunday, January 15, 2012

## Brady, Patriots halt TebowMania -- for now

By Bill Williamson

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. -- The [Denver Broncos](#) lost two games by a score of [45-10](#) this season. They were two lopsided bookends in an unpredictable journey that ended Saturday night.



In between not looking anything like a playoff team during an Oct. 30 home loss to Detroit and a season-ending thumping at the hands of the much better [New England Patriots](#), the Broncos reinvented themselves and became a team with hope for the future.

Tim Tebow's memorable run in the 2011 season ended with a 9-for-26 passing performance.

"It may be hard to see it now after an embarrassing loss," Denver tight end [Daniel Fells](#) said in a quiet Denver locker room Saturday night, "but there is something there. ... We did something this year that was unexpected, and there is something good to look forward to in the future."

That future very likely will include [Tim Tebow](#).

In a season in which Tebow became a household name in non-sports-centric households and in which he became a sport's lightning rod like we've rarely seen before, the Broncos' season ended with Tebow not being the story.

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While Tebow, who was just 9-of-26 passing for 136 yards, didn't do much to help his team, Saturday night's game was not a Tebow type of game. The Denver Broncos became an unlikely playoff team this season because they played smart, hard football in all three phases of the game in their victories. It became evident early Saturday that the allure of Tebow would be quickly overshadowed by the sheer brilliance of Patriots QB [Tom Brady](#) and the stunning dominance of second-year New England tight end [Rob Gronkowski](#).

Tebowing became a national craze and a phrase used daily. On Saturday, though, the Broncos were sent packing because they were Bradyed and Gronked.

Brady tied an NFL postseason record with six touchdown passes, and his 363 passing yards were a team playoff record. Gronkowski had 10 catches for 145 yards and three touchdowns. TebowMania might be cute, and it might be legitimate in the fourth quarter (and overtime) of close games. But it wasn't that type of party Saturday night.

Brady and company were bent on letting the rest of the NFL playoff field know they are tired of being considered a postseason antique. They're hunting for their first Super Bowl victory in seven years, TebowMania be damned.

While Denver's season ended in a fashion that usually would sting an organization, there wasn't a sense of despair in the locker room. It seemed the players knew this was a season of progress and it was a success, everything considered.

When Denver introduced John Fox as its coach a year ago Friday, there was no way anyone could have imagined the Broncos would advance to the final eight and beat the defending AFC champion [Pittsburgh Steelers](#) in the playoffs. This was a team that had the No. 2 overall pick in the 2011 draft. The rebuilding project seemed like it would take years.

That assessment didn't change when Denver started the season 1-4 before inserting Tebow at quarterback.

"People wanted to close the book on the Broncos," receiver [Matthew Willis](#) said. "But we kept fighting."

It all changed after the home loss to Detroit when Fox adjusted his offense to Tebow's skill set and used the option offense. The Broncos' offense transformed through the season and adjusted on the fly.

Now, the ride is over and the Broncos must look toward the future.

Tebow said Saturday night that he must become more accurate and consistent, and he plans to soon start working on what will be his first full offseason as an NFL player. Legendary Denver quarterback [John Elway](#), who is now the Broncos' football leader, has said he plans to personally

work with Tebow in the offseason, focusing on improving the youngster's footwork.

Elway was in Denver's locker room after the game and appeared satisfied with the season. He wasn't ready to chat about the future and has yet to confirm the Broncos will ride with Tebow as their quarterback in 2012. Don't be surprised, however, if the Broncos commit to Tebow soon.



In his first season as Broncos coach, John Fox, left, adjusted his approach to Tim Tebow's talents.

That's the direction the players want the team to take. Several Denver players said Saturday night that they believe Tebow will continue to make strides and he is the answer at quarterback.

"He's our guy," Denver rookie safety [Rahim Moore](#) said. "Our team jells around him. He is only going to get better."

That could be said of the entire Denver roster. This is a work in progress. Brady and New England's offense showed there is still much work to be done in Denver defensively. The Patriots compiled 509 yards of offense and took their foot off the gas in the second half after leading 35-7 at halftime.

Denver needs help on both sides of the ball. But there is no denying this is a well-coached team that tasted unexpected success in a season that might just be scratching the surface of TebowMania, if that's even possible.

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## Poll: 43 percent believe God helps Tebow win

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FOX Sports Florida Staff Reports

Some have made the joke that evangelical Denver Broncos quarterback Tim Tebow gets a little help from above when he takes the field on Sundays.

But a recent poll shows that there are plenty of people out there who truly believe that's the case.

According to a telephone survey conducted Tuesday [by the website Poll Position](#), 43.3 percent of people believe Tebow's accomplishments on the field can be attributed to divine intervention.

The poll surveyed 1,056 people, and of the 756 who said they were familiar with Tebow, roughly 327 of them said they believe God plays a role in the second-year NFL quarterback's success.

Only 42.3 percent of those familiar with Tebow said divine intervention does *not* play a role in Tebow's success (14.4 percent gave no opinion), meaning there are more respondents who do believe Tebow is receiving a little extra help than there are who don't.

The 18- to 29-year-old demographic was the most likely to believe that Tebow's accolades are a result of divine intervention, at 52.3 percent, followed by the 45- to 64-year-old age group (47.9 percent), the 30- to 44-year-old age group (38.1 percent) and respondents ages 65 or above (30.9 percent).

The poll also found that women were more likely than men to believe that God is a Broncos fan, with 46.4 percent of female respondents saying yes, as opposed to 40.6 percent of men.

When it comes to party affiliation, 54.2 percent of Republicans said they believe God plays a role in Tebow's success, as opposed to 38.2 percent of Democrats and 35.1 percent of independents.

And among ethnic groups, Latino respondents proved to be the biggest believers, with a whopping 81.3 percent saying they believe God helps Tebow and the Broncos succeed. 59.5 percent of black respondents and 38.3 percent of white respondents also said yes.

Tebow's faith has been a subject of much attention — and occasional ridicule — over the past few months. His traditional kneeling pose while praying on the field has [led to the "Tebowing" craze](#), and comedy show "Saturday Night Live" [recently performed a skit](#) poking fun at the former Gator's outwardly religious ways.

But Tebow seems to be taking all of the attention — positive and negative — in stride.

He has remained outspoken about his faith despite the criticism, and since Tebow took over the starting quarterback job in October, his Broncos are 8-4 — not to mention just two wins away from a spot in the Super Bowl.

Denver's next game is Saturday night in Foxborough, Mass., against Tom Brady and the New England Patriots.



According to a recent survey by Poll Position, 43.3 percent of people believe divine intervention plays a role in Tim Tebow's success with the Denver Broncos. (Ron Cheney-US PRESSWIRE)



**TEBOW TIME:** Can't get enough Tim Tebow? Then [hang out here!](#)



Jayne Kamin-Oncea-US PRESSWIRE

Superman's only weakness is Kryptonite.

# Kurt Warner on Tebow and Faith in Football

Video

Click [here](#) to watch the video.

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## Broncos' Tim Tebow completely cool with "Tebowing"

Posted: 10/28/2011 02:15:53 PM MDT  
Updated: 10/29/2011 09:32:40 AM MDT By **Lindsay H. Jones**  
*The Denver Post*

Posted: 10/28/2011 02:15:53 PM MDT  
Updated: 10/29/2011 09:32:40 AM MDT

Tim Tebow is a fan of Tebowing.

The Broncos quarterback learned of the Internet phenomenon — individuals taking pictures of themselves while kneeling in a prayer pose — from teammate Von Miller, who was the first Bronco to practice the art of Tebowing.

"Goofball," Tebow said, laughing.

Tebow then went online and saw dozens of pictures from across the country posted by people who had uploaded photos of themselves in the Tebowing pose.

"What's funny about it is how rapidly it's caught on, and how much it has taken off," Tebow said Friday in the Broncos' locker room.

Tebow said he understands that some people might be using Tebowing to mock him, or religion in general. He is more excited,

though, about those who are taking it seriously.

"It's not my job to see peoples' reasons behind it, but I know (of a kid) with cancer that tweeted me, 'Tebowing while I'm chemoing' — how cool is that?" Tebow said. "That's worth it right now. If that gives him any encouragement or puts a smile on his face, or gives him encouragement to pray, that's completely awesome."

Denver native Jared Kleinstein started the Tebowing website earlier this week after he and his friends took a picture outside a New York City bar of the group in Tebow's prayer pose. The fad exploded online by Thursday afternoon.

Kleinstein's initial definition of "Tebowing" was "to get down on a knee and start praying, even if everyone else around you is doing something completely different."

Tebow fully supports that definition.

"It is serious, for me," Tebow said. "At least it's being talked about, and that's a cool thing. If I can help be an example of that, then I look at that as a blessing."



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## Tim Tebow and John 3:16

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Thursday, January 12, 2012 - [World's Best-Selling Book](#) by Donald L. Brake, Sr.



**Ask Donald L. a Question**

**FLOWER MOUND, TX, January 12, 2012**—Most sports fans know the incredible story of Tim Tebow, quarterback for the Denver Broncos professional football team. He has become the face of a faith that has made him a national football and social phenomena.

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His mother, Pamela Elaine is the daughter of a U.S. Army colonel, and his father, Robert Ramsey Tebow II, is a Baptist pastor. While serving as missionaries in the Philippines, his mother became pregnant and suffered a life-threatening infection with a pathogenic amoeba. The doctors warned that the drugs used to bring her out of a coma and to treat her dysentery could cause a stillbirth and possibly kill her.

They advised her to have an abortion to protect her own life. In spite of the warning and dangers, she refused to abort the fetus that is Tim Tebow.

The youngest of five children, Tim began a life of football success. Achieving great success in high school, he went on to win two national championships as the quarterback for the University of Florida Gators, winning the Heisman trophy as a sophomore. He was drafted in the first round of the NFL draft by the Denver Broncos in 2010.

Tim Tebow is most famously known for his outspoken Christian Witness. In order to instill Christian principles in Tim, his parents taught him at home. His faith has been a vital part of his rise to "rock-star" status.

The Bible verse John 3:16 ("For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

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▶ whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.") came into prominence when it appeared at athletic events accompanied with a person wearing a rainbow colored wig. It was generally dismissed as an expression of a radical right-wing Christian.

At games at the University of Florida, Tim Tebow prominently displayed the verse reference "John 3:16" on his eye-black under his eyes. Tim and the Bible passage gained national prominence after he passed for 316 yards against the Pittsburgh Steelers in the Broncos' miracle-like victory in overtime in the wildcard game on Sunday.

In addition it was reported that he averaged 31.6 yards per toss, also the length of the winning pass caught by Demaryius Thomas, who was born on December 25, 1987 - Christmas day.

Tim's stature as a football star has been built on his fourth-quarter comebacks, and it has vaulted him into a national football and social phenomenon with the upset victory over the Pittsburgh Steelers.

It was the first overtime game since the National Football league established a rule allowing overtime playoff games to end with each team having a possession before a winner was determined—except if just one team scored a touchdown on their first possession. On the very first play of overtime Tebow threw an 80 yard touchdown pass to win the game.

The week is filled with speculation whether or not the Broncos led by Tim Tebow have been winning with divine intervention. A recent telephone poll revealed 43% of those familiar with Tebow's accomplishments believe that divine intervention accounts for the victory against the

Steelers. As Yogi Berra reportedly once said that it was not fair for people to pray for divine intervention in sports events, it should be nine against nine, or in football eleven against eleven.

John 3:16 is a summary verse of the Christian message of the entire Bible from the Garden of Eden to the creation of the new heavens and new earth. It declares that the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden is reversed by the sacrifice of the new Adam, Jesus Christ. The new birth brings one, who was born in sin and condemned, to a new life of forgiveness and eternal life. That new situation is brought about by faith in the sacrifice of Christ's death on the cross.

Does Tim Tebow have an inside track with God's plan for football games? Or does he have a "good luck charm" much like putting a penny in one's shoe or fulfilling a pregame ritual to guarantee success? Will God enable Tim Tebow and the Denver Broncos to defeat the favored New England Patriots?

Sunday's victory or defeat is not the issue. There are those who may be faithful Christians praying for the New England Patriots. Does God view Tim Tebow's prayer with more favor than other Christians' prayers? Many athletes pause at the end of a touchdown to acknowledge thankfulness. Why is Tebow singled out for his act of thankfulness? It comes at the conclusion of the play, not in the huddle to seek divine help.

Tebow's now famous "prayer pose" is publicly acknowledging his "Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" for His work in his life and for giving him the talent to play a simple game of football. Tim is fulfilling a command of God, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Many Christians are thankful for men and women like Tim Tebow, who will make public declarations of their faith in God.

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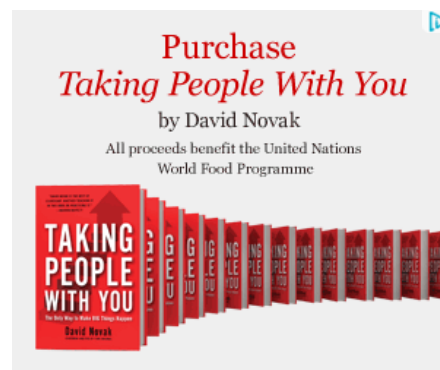
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**ESPN**

Friday, January 13, 2012

## I believe in Tim Tebow

By Rick Reilly  
ESPN.com

I've come to believe in [Tim Tebow](#), but not for what he does on a football field, which is still three parts Dr. Jekyll and two parts Mr. Hyde.

No, I've come to believe in Tim Tebow for what he does off a football field, which is represent the best parts of us, the parts I want to be and so rarely am.

Who among us is this selfless?

Every week, Tebow picks out someone who is suffering, or who is dying, or who is injured. He flies these people and their families to the Broncos game, rents them a car, puts them up in a nice hotel, buys them dinner (usually at a Dave & Buster's), gets them and their families pregame passes, visits with them just before kickoff (!), gets them 30-yard-line tickets down low, visits with them after the game (sometimes for an hour), has them walk him to his car, and sends them off with a basket of gifts.

Home or road, win or lose, hero or goat.

Remember last week, when the world was pulling its hair out in the hour after Tebow had stunned the [Pittsburgh Steelers](#) with an 80-yard OT touchdown pass to [Demaryius Thomas](#) in the playoffs? And Twitter was exploding with 9,420 tweets about Tebow *per second*? When an ESPN poll was naming him the most popular athlete in America?

Tebow was spending that hour talking to 16-year-old Bailey Knaub about her 73 surgeries so far and what TV shows she likes.

### MORE FROM TIM TEBOW

For Tim Tebow's take on being named America's most popular athlete, [click here](#).



Tim Tebow with Jacob Rainey, one of the many people dealing with health problems Tebow hosted at Broncos games this season.

"Here he'd just played the game of his life," recalls Bailey's mother, Kathy, of Loveland, Colo., "and the first thing he does after his press conference is come find Bailey and ask, 'Did you get anything to eat?' He acted like what he'd just done wasn't anything, like it was all about Bailey."

More than that, Tebow kept corralling people into the room for Bailey to meet. Hey, Demaryius, come in here a minute. Hey, Mr. Elway. Hey, Coach Fox.

Even though sometimes-fatal Wegener's granulomatosis has left Bailey with only one lung, the attention took her breath away.

"It was the best day of my life," she emailed. "It was a bright star among very gloomy and difficult days. Tim Tebow gave me the greatest gift I could ever imagine. He gave me the strength for the future. I know now that I can face any obstacle placed in front of me. Tim taught me to never give up because at the end of the day, today might seem bleak but it can't rain forever and tomorrow is a new day, with new promises."

I read that email to Tebow, and he was honestly floored.

"Why me? Why should I inspire her?" he said. "I just don't feel, I don't know, adequate. Really, hearing her story inspires me."

It's not just NFL defenses that get Tebowed. It's high school girls who don't know whether they'll ever go to a prom. It's adults who can hardly stand. It's kids who will die soon.

For the game at Buffalo, it was Charlottesville, Va., blue-chip high school QB Jacob Rainey, who lost his leg after a freak tackle in a scrimmage. Tebow threw three interceptions in that Buffalo game and the Broncos were crushed 40-14.

"He walked in and took a big sigh and said, 'Well, that didn't go as planned,'" Rainey remembers. "Where I'm from, people wonder how sincere and genuine he is. But I think he's the most genuine person I've ever met."

There's not an ounce of artifice or phoniness or Hollywood in this kid Tebow, and I've looked everywhere for it.

Take 9-year-old Zac Taylor, a child who lives in constant pain. Immediately after Tebow shocked the [Chicago Bears](#) with a 13-10 comeback win, Tebow spent an hour with Zac and his family. At one point, Zac, who has 10 doctors, asked Tebow whether he has a secret prayer for hospital visits. Tebow whispered it in his ear. And because Tebow still needed to be checked out by the Broncos' team doctor, he took Zac in with him, but only after they had whispered it together.

And it's not always kids. Tom Driscoll, a 55-year-old who is dying of brain cancer at a hospice in Denver, was Tebow's guest for the Cincinnati game. "The doctors took some of my brain," Driscoll says, "so my short-term memory is kind of shot. But that day I'll *never* forget. Tim is such a good man."

This whole thing makes no football sense, of course. Most NFL players hardly talk to *teammates* before a game, much less visit with the sick and dying.

Isn't that a huge distraction?

"Just the opposite," Tebow says. "It's by far the best thing I do to get myself ready. Here you are, about to play a game that the world says is the most important thing in the world. Win and they praise you. Lose and they crush you. And here I have a chance to talk to the coolest, most

courageous people. It puts it all into perspective. The game doesn't really matter. I mean, I'll give 100 percent of my heart to win it, but in the end, the thing I most want to do is not win championships or make a lot of money, it's to invest in people's lives, to make a difference."

So that's it. I've given up giving up on him. I'm a 100 percent believer. Not in his arm. Not in his skills. I believe in his heart, his there-will-definitely-be-a-pony-under-the-tree optimism, the way his love pours into people, right up to their eyeballs, until they believe they can master the hopeless comeback, too.



Not everything Tim Tebow does on one knee is controversial. Ask Zac Taylor.

Remember the QB who lost his leg, Jacob Rainey? He got his prosthetic leg a few weeks ago, and he wants to play high school football next season. Yes, tackle football. He'd be the first to do that on an above-the-knee amputation.

Hmmm. Wonder where he got that crazy idea?

"Tim told me to keep fighting, no matter what," Rainey says. "I am."

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Rick Reilly is the 11-time National Sportswriter of the Year. He contributes essays and commentary to "Monday Night Countdown," "SportsCenter," and ESPN/ABC golf and tennis coverage. He's also the host of "[Homecoming](#)," ESPN's unique, one-hour interview show set in the hometowns of legendary athletes. For more Rick, [check out the archive.](#)

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