

News Story Summary

To say that baseball “lifers” Jim Aalderink, Ralph Palmer, and Jack Hample really enjoy the game of baseball would be an understatement. They each have demonstrated that they are diehard fans. Aalderink spends the entire year following the sport and has attended games in 61 big league parks. Palmer attended the first and last games ever played in Fulton County Stadium and Turner Field in Atlanta. Hample has visited 53 major league stadiums and attended 1,400 games all over the U.S. He claims to have snagged 9,514 balls.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase “Diehard baseball fan at SunTrust.”)

Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea, ask: *At what point do our activities become excessive?* Read the news story summary about three diehard baseball fans. Ask: *How do you think the attitude of these men to the sport of baseball impacts their relationships?* Explain that baseball is only one of many activities that people enjoy excessively. They sacrifice time, money, and energy to the exclusion of other matters. Their love for baseball dominates their lives.. In Psalm 95, the psalmist encourages believers to make the worship of God a priority. Nothing should take the place of praising God, because He alone is worthy of worship.

Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, remind group members of the news story summary. Ask: *What sacrifices do you think these men make as a baseball fan? What difference would it make if believers spent the same time and energy worshiping God?* Explain that God--who created the world, provided the gift of salvation, and cares deeply for His children--deserves our praise and worship. Challenge group members to make any necessary adjustments to their time and habits if other activities are pulling them away from heartfelt worship of God.