

## **My Life Was Built On How I Performed**

**“In horseshoes and hand grenades, close matters...but close doesn't matter in kicking field goals.” – Todd Peterson**

It's Saturday night in SEC country in the Fall of 1991. The Georgia Bulldogs are playing Alabama's Crimson Tide in Tuscaloosa. ESPN is televising—a big stage in college football. It's late in the 3rd quarter. The score is 0 - 0. The Bulldogs find themselves on Alabama's 7th yard line. If they score, Georgia could win. They decide to kick a field goal. The snap is great, the hold is great, the protection team does its job—a chip shot. Todd kicks the ball and barely misses wide left. Close doesn't matter on Saturday night in Tuscaloosa on ESPN. Alabama ends up scoring and Georgia loses 10 - 0. The bus ride home for Todd and his team felt like an eternity.

Todd realized something about his life at that point—that he had an identity built on performance. If he performed, he felt good about himself. If he performed, he figured people would like him. His life was tied directly to how he performed. Over the ensuing weeks, Todd came to understand that when your performance dictates your identity, at some point in time you will have an identity crisis because you can't always perform. And by the grace of God, Todd came to put his trust not in his performance but in the one sure foundation in life—Jesus Christ.

With that most important life lesson settled, Todd went on to achieve a successful twelve year NFL career as a placekicker for the Giants, Cardinals, Seahawks, Chiefs, Steelers, 49ers and Falcons—where he concluded his football career in 2005 with a remarkable 235 out of 296 (79.4%) field goal record.

In his 2017 MGF talk, Todd emphasized to us who we are is not what we do, what our name is, or what's in our bank account. Who we are is 100% dictated by the fact that God wants us to understand that we are His loved sons just because He is our perfect heavenly Father.

“The folly of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.” (1 Corinthians 1:25). That verse brought a lot into perspective during Todd's early faith journey. He reasoned: if God's foolishness was better than any wisdom he had, and if His strength was better than any strength he could muster—he would be crazy not to walk with God.

Todd never lost his desire to be the best person he could be and to succeed in his world. But he understands the only path to true success was to walk with Him and to trust Him with his life.

Todd's closing challenge to us was very powerful and very true:

“We're going to be judged in this life not on whether we made kicks, not on whether or not we got the company to go public, not on whether or not we had a good exit. Not on anything temporal. We're going to be judged on two things—what we do with who we say Jesus is, and what we do with what He gave us in this lifetime. Two things last forever—the Word of God and the souls of men. We want to be sure that what we do with our lives is invest in things that last, the things that matter most—where the Word of God collides with the souls of men.”

- Where is your identity ?
- Where are you investing in life?
- How did you come to discover your role in life?
- Were there gaps or adjustments once you retired?
- What would your family say your foundation is built on?

Click on the link to watch Todd's 8 minute story

<https://vimeo.com/345453031>