

STEPPING INTO OUR DESTINY

Ontario UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) fans are counting down the days until 2011. The province is lifting its self-imposed ban on the "sport" on January first and it is believed up to 50,000 fans will cram the Rogers Centre to watch the soon-to-be-scheduled Toronto event.

All of which begs the question: Why would this many people shell out big bucks to watch modern-day gladiators beat each other submission? What animalistic itch is scratched as grown men kick, punch and grapple with a sweat-soaked opponent?

For some, it's an opportunity to relive their lost childhood. Though most will never climb into a professional ring, the majority experienced their fair share of tussles and fights.

While growing up, my siblings and I had our own version of UFC called Unending Family Conflict. A certain yellow-toque incident is crystal clear even decades after the infraction occurred. After a disagreement in the barn, my brother snatched my treasured toque from my head and tromped it into a nearby gutter brimming with cow caca. Fists flew in the battle for sibling supremacy. I won -- at least that's *my* story and I'm sticking with it. It's better than what stuck to my cherished yellow headgear.

Back to the present. Some observers show up to admire the athletic prowess of the participants -- and they are amazing athletes. While viewing chiseled chests and rippled six-packs, audible sighs escape as onlookers ponder what could have been if they had put down the pizza and picked up the barbell just a little earlier in life. Regrets are measured in expanded belt notches.

For most in the stands, the fights will touch off more than remembrances and regrets. It will stir a deep desire to be more than what we presently are, to do more than we ever imagined. Yes, the sum of our desires will usually exceed present life experience. Some call it a dream, I call it destiny. We were created for greatness.

To understand our true potential, we need only examine that ancient biblical relative, Adam. His pre-sin state is a picture of all that we long for.

His life-adventure was punctuated with purpose that naturally emanated from involvement in God's plans. Modern day descendants tend to grasp for purpose via employment, human relationships or adventure. However, these keys just don't unlock the door of genuine fulfillment.

Adam understood and walked in commitment. His first words to his freshly minted spouse were a declaration of covenant: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Humans have largely lost this undying devotion to do what is right despite personal sacrifice that may be required. I call it de-evolution; going morally backwards.

The first world leader walked near to God. The Divine involved more than a once-a-week religious encounter. He was Adam's best friend, confidant and work out partner (they walked together each evening). Atheism was unimaginable.

I believe these Adam-traits are deeply imbedded in the human psyche; though hidden and oft-ignored, they linger, flickering like a candle in the wind; always there, never quite extinguished. They tantalize us, stirring our spiritual taste-buds, a constant reminder that the raw ingredients of greatness lie dormant in our soul

My friends, we were created to be life-champions; to walk with head held high, to stride purposefully with and for our God, to dream big and live bigger.

The courageous pursue this inner longing, stepping boldly into their destiny-ring. The rest sit round and watch from the grandstand of regret, safe but never quite satisfied.