

**Essay from the bald pastor
#60 - Ichimeter lady -**

Ichiro of Seattle Mariners set the major league record for hits in 2004 surpassing George Sisler's 257-hit season. Ever since, there is a woman who has been counting his hits on a handmade wooden board in the front row of the right field stands at Safeco Field, Mariners' home stadium. Her name is Amy Franz. The counting board became known as "Ichimeter" which combines Ichiro and a meter, and the original Ichimeter is now in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

During the pregame practice after he announced his trade to New York Yankees, Ichiro walked up and thanked her for her support through the years. He even autographed the ichimeter after the game. This was her very first time to talk to him or even to get his autograph. Overwhelmed with the mixed feeling of excitement and distress over his leaving, Amy couldn't hold back her tears.

However, it turns out that this was not the end of the story. To her surprise, she received a package from Ichiro on the day before Thanksgiving. Inside the package were a handwritten thank-you note as well as an autographed bat and a pair of cleats. Needless to say, she almost passed out with excitement.

Having learned about this incident, I thought of the God who sent us Jesus Christ on Christmas Day and also the God who always encourages us. The relationship between Ichiro and Amy manifests the voice of those who believe in God with all of their hearts as expressed in the following;

"I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live."

Psalm 116-1-2

Although some people seem to think of God as someone that punishes us, he is the one that supports us everyday by sending us his autograph in the form of "saviors." We shall send him our appreciation this Christmas.

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