

## Dodger JD Drew Can't Hide His Faith

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By Tim Ellsworth

VERO BEACH, Fla. (BP)--JD Drew was warming up in the outfield with some of his Los Angeles Dodgers teammates prior to a recent spring training game with the St. Louis Cardinals.

A native of Hahira, GA, Drew can't hide his Southern accent or his upbringing, so he has come to accept the good-natured jabs by his colleagues in the game. A devout Christian, Drew also can't hide his faith, and he hopes those around him can see it shining through in his life.

"God's blessed me with a lot of talent to play the game of baseball, and I want to honor Him by playing it to the best of my ability and working as hard as I can," Drew said.

Drew said he thinks about the example he sets, especially when times are difficult. And he's had his share of those times. Though skilled as a baseball player, Drew has had trouble staying healthy in his professional baseball career. He has reached 500 at-bats only one season during his seven-year career.

"There's going to be ups and downs," Drew said. "There are going to be times when you're angry at yourself for not playing as well as you think you should. It's how you handle those things that -- I think -- makes people realize that you stand for something, that you have something to fall back on."

It's not all bad for Drew, however. He and his wife, Sheigh, had their first child, Jack David, just more than a month ago. Drew said his son's birth has given him an increased awareness of his responsibilities as a Christian father.

"It's how I was raised and I realize the importance of raising your kids in a firm foundation and teaching them what the Bible says at an early age," Drew said. "By no means am I going to put any pressure on him to get a decision from him, but I'm going to teach him the simple truths -- that what the Bible says is true and that God sent His Son to die for him, and it's a free gift. I think it will be a lot of fun teaching him that kind of stuff."

Drew said his new role as father will make life during the baseball season a little more difficult because he's on the road much of the time.

"It's going to be tough," Drew said. "But we're fortunate that we have the finances to do some things we want to do, if they want to travel."

For Drew, he'll rely on God's guidance when it comes to raising his son -- or when it comes to living his life as a professional baseball player. His Christian faith is what defines him on and off the field.

"It's just a mindset for me," Drew said. "It's an everyday lifestyle. It's something that I commit to every time I wake up in the morning and every time I go to bed at night."