

**'QUIT' HAS NO PLACE IN OUR VOCABULARY
By Dan Britton**

Several years ago, a high school football team in Michigan, U.S.A. cancelled the last five games of its season after going 0–4 and having not scored a point at the start of the season. Going winless and scoreless has a sting to it, but my heart hurts thinking that someone gave up on that group of athletes.

Think about the possible victories those athletes will never experience. I do not mean to on-the-field victories. From what was reported, the team probably would have finished 0–9. However, lasting victories are not about points on a scoreboard, or wins and losses. What matters are the life victories the athletes were not able to experience this season. I suppose the coaches and athletic officials had never heard the famous Winston Churchill quote, “Never give in – never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in....” For him, “quit” was a four-letter profanity.

Twenty years from now, those athletes might be wishing their coaches had not given up on them. Even if they had gone winless and scoreless, it could have been a defining moment that developed character.

Unfortunately, quitting is something that has permeated many segments of society, including the business and professional world. People quit without giving any thought to possible repercussions. I believe the word needs to be removed from our vocabulary. Not only do I see it as a curse word, but it also becomes a curse to all who live by it.

I will never forget the conversation I had with a 16-year-old boy during a young athletes’ retreat. During free time, he was sitting by himself, his head in his hands. Something was troubling him, so I sat by him hoping to help. I simply asked, “What’s wrong?” I was prepared for a typical young person’s response: girlfriend problems; alcohol or drugs; friendship struggles, or issues at school. So, I was shocked when he said, “I hate that my parents let me quit everything I start.”

The young man proceeded to explain that everything he started, he quit. He then blurted out, “I just wish they would make me finish what I started.” Wow! Usually I hear the exact opposite, “I hate that my parents make me finish everything I start.” But this aspiring athlete wanted encouragement not to quit.

The Bible clearly addresses the importance of not quitting, of determining to confront adversity in whatever form it takes. “Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. But endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing” (James 1:2–4).

Our families, teams, businesses, organizations, churches, and schools should be places for cultivating a spirit of finishing – and finishing well. The four-letter word, “Quit,” should be eliminated from our conversations. The apostle Paul reminds us in Galatians 6:9 the reward of

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not quitting: “So let us not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.”

We each will become known by others as either a finisher or a quitter. The choice is ours, but the difference between the two is life-changing. Because it is in the struggle and strain that God shapes us and molds us. We will miss out on what He is trying to do in our lives if we quit when things get hard.

Dan Britton is a writer, coach and trainer who serves as the Chief Field Officer with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and leads thousands of staff in over 100 countries. Britton played professional lacrosse with the Baltimore Thunder and has coauthored eight books, including: One Word, WisdomWalks, and Called to Greatness. He is a frequent speaker for companies, non-profits and sports teams. Dan and his wife, Dawn, reside in Overland Park, Kansas, and have three married children and a granddaughter.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever quit something and later regretted that decision? What was the situation and how do you think you could have handled it better? What might have happened if you had not quit?
2. Why do you think it has become such a common option for people to quit when, as they say, “the going gets tough”?
3. Can you think of anyone – perhaps even yourself – who is being tempted to quit because circumstances have become difficult? How might you respond by encouraging them (or yourself) to discard the word “quit” and replace it with qualities such as perseverance, dedication, resilience, and endurance?
4. The Bible verses cited indicate God uses trials and adversity to shape our character and to change us into people of faith, hope, and determination? Do you believe this? Why or why not?

CHALLENGE

Sometimes the obstacles we face seem almost insurmountable. We can become discouraged, which means to lose the courage to continue, to persevere. At such times we all can benefit from people who care for us and will support us through difficulties. Who can you turn to when you need to be encouraged? It could be an individual, or a small group of people you know have your best interests at heart. Identify them today and resolve to openly share struggles you are facing. Similarly, consider today how you can serve as a resource for someone who needs encouragement.

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages: Jeremiah 29:11-14; Romans 5: 3-5, 8:35-39; 1Corinthians 15:58; 1 Peter 1:6-7

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