

How Spirit-Led Are You?

Whenever a season comes to a close, coaches like myself and others immediately look to the next year, sometimes too quickly. We start by reflecting on the season that just ended. What were the successes? What were the failures? What did we learn? Looking back on the season helps us move forward with hope, excitement and encouragement, knowing a game plan is in place.

The same principles can exist outside of sports as we reflect on our lives at Thanksgiving and each time the calendar year comes to a close. Around this time, I always begin to ask myself specific questions, taking inventory of where I am and how the past year has impacted me.

Mentally, what have I learned over the course of the year? How have I put those lessons into practice?

Physically, how is my health? What kind of physical shape am I in, and what good or bad habits are contributing to that?

Spiritually, how deep is my relationship with God? How Spirit-led have my interactions with others been?

This year, my answers to those questions will be unique. I'll never forget starting my tenure as president and CEO of this great ministry [Fellowship of Christian Athletes] in January 2016, but what I'll remember most fondly about my first year are the ways in which FCA came together as "One," based on Philippians 1:27 and right in line with our camp theme this past summer, where more than 113,000 were impacted for Christ. More than 1,500 FCA staff around the country were as unified as ever, all in the continual effort to reach more coaches and athletes with the saving message of Jesus Christ.

Reflection and thanksgiving are crucial, but building upon them is even more essential. Life is never in neutral. It's up

to us to decide how engaged we are with the present moment because, quite literally, it's passing us by. The past can be a great learning tool, but we must be intentional in how we use what we've learned from past successes and failures to improve upon all that lies ahead.

Joshua knew the importance of reflection in Joshua 4:21-22, when he built an altar with 12 stones from the Jordan River and told the Israelites,

"He said to the children of Israel, 'When your children someday ask their parents, "What do these stones mean?" then you shall explain to your children, 'Israel crossed over the Jordan here on dry ground!'"

What does reflection look like in your life? How can you learn and grow from this past year's experiences? Are you reflecting on the past, listening to trusted friends and family for their honest opinions, and being intentional about implementing what God is teaching you about yourself for the future?

Reflection is an opportunity to be reminded of God's provision in our lives. It gives us the chance to praise Him and be purposeful for the future, growing closer to Him and living more like He's called us to live.

Ultimately, He calls us to a life of freedom found only in Him as we seek to become more like Him every day. As 2 Corinthians 3:16-18 says, "Nevertheless when anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, seeing the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, as in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord." {eoa}

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