

Heart of a Coach – September 2017



Name: Manny Atwood

Hometown: Chetek, WI, Lamoni, IA, Leon, IA

Alma Mater: Graceland University – BA

Northwest Missouri State University - MSED

Coaches: Central Decatur Junior High Girls Basketball

List your chosen attribute: Faith

What is your personal definition of this word? You may feel lost and alone, but God knows exactly where you are, and He has a good plan for your life.

What are some of your favorite quotes from other people about this word?

“Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.”

-Saint Augustine

“You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.” – Mahatma Gandhi

What is your favorite Biblical passage that deals with this characteristic?

“Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.” Matthew 17:20

Why did you choose that particular passage? Growing up in a greenhouse where we raised many plants, I could always relate to this scripture. Plus, my father used it in many examples when he was discussing faith. When you plant a seed, you have faith it will grow. When you look at a small seed, like a mustard seed, and understand what Christ is saying in his example, we can do anything thru Him.

Please give an application/example of this word in your life

I have always been a person who believes that if you have faith, good things will happen. The past 4 years have been a struggle for me because of some personal issues that I really couldn't share with others, and I didn't have much faith things would ever get better. I was surviving because of the faith others had in me, my close friends, family and church family. I was about as low as a person could get in life and then I was also diagnosed with a pituitary brain tumor in August 2016. This actually helped me sort through many issues and turn things around in my mind. Realizing you don't have much control of what happens sometimes, you have to put all of your faith in Jesus Christ. My faith was about the size of that mustard seed, but I did move that mountain. Here it is August 2017, and because of that faith, prayers and the support of hundreds of great people, I continue on in good health and a new life 1 year later.

How do you apply this word in your sport? Whenever you coach, you are preparing athletes for the battle and you have to have faith in what you are doing in practices is preparing for life skills-good sportsmanship, teamwork, working together, respect for hard work, and winning and losing with dignity. When we are finished I want to be able to say "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

How did you become involved in FCA? A great student named Keaton Minnick, contacted me and asked me about being a sponsor of the FCA group we have started. Keaton had started laying the groundwork and had contacted other FCA groups and with the help of Gary Gravert, our district FCA rep, we have a successful group at Central Decatur School. I hope to be more active in the state FCA organization and involve more students in camps in the future.

What is your athletic experience? (Where?) I participated in many sports in high school with basketball being my favorite. I continue to be involved in high school sports officiating basketball and volleyball in Missouri and Iowa for 40 years, starting when I was 18.

What is your coaching experience? (Where?) I started coaching JH boys basketball in 1989, spent a few years at the varsity level, and returned to the junior high level and currently coach junior high girls. The love of the game is what keeps me going in coaching and officiating.