

CHAPTER 15

NO HOLDING BACK



Biblical Lessons for Students, Athletes & More

Individual or Group Experience

FOCAL VERSE

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV)

WISE WORDS

“While God is sovereign and can certainly work out all things for our good, may we never rationalize that our half-hearted effort is God’s best for our life.”

—Lynne Raatz

Introduction

While I’m admittedly not an avid fan of baseball, it’s evident to me that Derek Jeter has had a tremendous impact on the game of baseball and his list of accolades are lengthy! Jeter, an acclaimed shortstop and captain for the New York Yankees, led baseball’s most renowned franchise to seven pennants and five World Series titles during his 20-year career with the league. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 2021.

As we focus on the topic of “No Holding Back,” let’s take a peek into the mindset of Jeter by reading the following quotes:

- *“There may be people who have more talent than you, but there’s no excuse for anyone to work harder than you do—and I believe that.”*
- *“The last thing you want to do is finish playing or doing anything and wish you would have worked harder.”*
- *“I love when people doubt me. It makes me work harder to prove them wrong.”*

Notice the overarching theme here? It’s not “work hard.” It’s “work harder!” That’s what made Jeter a champion! That’s what made him great—Hall of Famer kind of great.

Page 101

Before diving into today’s reading, ask yourself (or your group) the same questions I asked my players, as noted in the opening paragraph.

- **What keeps you from being great (at your craft)? What limits you from being a more effective athlete?**
- **What about your spiritual life? What keeps you from being a “great” or an effective follower of Christ?**

But first...

LEADER: If a member from the group memorized Matthew 10:33, give them an opportunity to recite the verse at this time.

- Did you catch yourself “denying Christ” this week? Or, better yet, did you catch yourself defending the gospel?

START
HERE

Begin Session 15 by flipping to page 103. Conduct the exercise in the middle of the page, then proceed with today’s introduction.

“I’ve always believed that if you put in the work, the results will come. I don’t do things half-heartedly. Because I know if I do, then I can expect half-hearted results.”



Read through page 101. Pause and answer the series of questions listed at the bottom of the page 101 as honestly as you're willing. I've listed the questions below.

- **Do you hold back from giving God your best?**
- **When you stroll out of the gym after practice, a game, tournament, (or work), can you honestly say you presented yourself to God as "one approved?"**
- **Are you consistently proud of your effort and not ashamed of your work ethic or attitude?**
- **Are you proud of your work in the classroom/workplace, giving full effort to your studies or responsibilities?**

Page 102/103

- **After reading paragraph two, scan over it again and pick out the words that characterize an "approved worker."**
- I offered several examples of what it could look like to live as a "worker approved" when it comes to being a follower of Jesus and a basketball player.
- **After reading through the examples on page 102 & 103, make a list (or discuss) additional ideas or examples of what it means to not hold back in your work.**

Player Application

Don't rush through the player application. There are lots of great questions to ponder. Encourage the athletes to PRACTICE the extra ounce principle in every area of their lives, including their spiritual lives.

Coach Application

It can be exhausting correcting the same behaviors and mistakes over and over. When we're physically drained, it can be easier to let behaviors slide rather than mustering up the energy to discipline, remind, and correct. We can lose patience with such players and shift our focus to those who are hungry and *want* to be taught. That's natural. I want to encourage you to love difficult athletes with the same affection you love your "favorite" athletes or students. (I know you have them). You may be the only person who is willing to invest in their maturity—mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Don't hold back from encouraging them .

Parent Application

Some children have an innate work ethic from the get-go; they're just were born that way! Others need to see it modeled day in and day out. You *will* be one of their most significant examples. Show them what it looks like to be a diligent worker. By the same token, show them what it looks like to model a day of rest!

Page 105

Personal Training Session

- **Read through, and answer the questions on page 105.**
- **CHALLENGE: write down your answer(s) to the third bullet point on a notecard.** Place the notecard in a place it can be seen everyday—bathroom mirror, refrigerator, gym locker, etc. This should serve as a reminder to "work harder" and not hold back!

Post-Game Prayer

