

Thrill is accepting good in everything

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.

What a thrill to see the best athletes in the world compete. Watching the United States women's gymnastics team win the gold medal fills one's heart with pride and joy, and tremendous admiration. It takes more than talent. It is dogged determination, incessant practice and total commitment. Each member of the team expresses these qualities. Each member gave their all.

In a prerecorded interview with Shannon Miller, she talked about the 1992 Olympics. She quietly explained that she did not think about losing the gold medal. She won the silver. How much better it is to think of ourselves as winners than losers.

Rather than reiterate and exaggerate our mistakes, isn't it wiser to start with our successes? What have we achieved? What good have we accomplished? What kind word have we spoken or good deed done?

Thinking on these things inspires us to do good again. It encourages us to strive to do better. As the Bible teaches, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

What about mistakes? Perhaps we gave our best performance but it was still not good enough. Perhaps we unintentionally made a mistake or purposefully did what we knew we shouldn't. It is imperative that we acknowledge an error was made. Unless mistakes are recognized they will continue undetected. One can't improve until one knows what requires correction.

When a mistake is recognized it should be faced squarely rather than excused. Instead of finding reasons why a mistake was justified, we can honestly face it with the assurance that we are capable of doing better.

Confidence in one's goodness, that man is the child of God, endowed with ability to express good qualities, enables us to challenge mistakes and overcome them. We are not destined to repeat failures. Limitations, like mistakes, are not fixed facts. They exist only to be erased. Confidence in the power of good and our ability to express God enable us to break through past behavior.

So as we cheer athletes from around the globe striving to perform their best, let's resolve to cherish the bronze and silver medals in our own lives. Let's appreciate the good that we have done and are doing, and thus prepare ourselves to do even better.

Published in: *Gallatin News Examiner July 26, 1996*