

Triple Threat

Ready:

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. -

Set I still remember being a 12-year-old aspiring basketball player and hearing NBA Hall-of-Famer Adrian Dantley teach about basketball's "triple threat." I learned that when you first receive the ball, you are in a great position with three potential options: dribble, shoot or pass. I wouldn't soon forget the power of the triple threat. It changed the way I played basketball, and it even helped me beat my older brother in one-on-one a few times. As followers of Christ, we also have a "triple threat." Our opponent, Satan, wants to defeat us and take us out. He doesn't want us to win and is working overtime to make sure you and I are discouraged and overwhelmed. We start believing that the goal in life is to just survive—just get through one more day. When I coach, I always tell players that they need to be a threat on the court. If you get the basketball and the defender knows you aren't going to do anything with the ball, the defender will smother you. But if the other players know you are a threat, they will be on their heels when you have the ball. It changes everything! In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul gives us a great spiritual triple threat. It is simply this: BE, PRAY, GIVE. This kind of triple threat will surely put Satan on his heels! Threat #1: Be Joyful Always Paul says to be joyful always, not sometimes. And this means more than just being happy. Joy is at the core of our soul. It is internal, while happiness is external. Happiness can come and go, but joy is constant. The joy of Christ should fill our hearts so that the outside stuff doesn't creep in. Don't let anyone or anything rob you of the joy that God has placed in you. Be a threat to Satan by allowing joy to pour out of your heart and affect others for eternity. Threat #2: Pray Continually You might be saying to yourself, "I pray, just not all the time." The idea is not to be praying with our eyes closed and hands folded all day long, but instead to always be connected to our Maker—to always have access to the throne of glory. There should always be a prayer in our heart and on our lips. Prayer takes effort and time. It is hard, but continual prayer should change the way we live. E.M. Bounds said, "Get people to pray, and they will stop sinning, because prayer creates a distaste for sinning." Are your prayers shaking the gates of Hell? When you pray is Satan on his heels? Threat #3: Give Thanks in All Circumstances In all three threats, Paul uses extreme commands. First, it was "always," then "continually," and, finally, it is "all." Just like in 1 Corinthians 13, we need to use our words to build up others, bringing praise. When we speak, we either speak life or death. Giving thanks means speaking life in every situation: in the locker room, classroom, home, on the phone and even online. Proverbs 15 says that reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. When you speak, do you bring healing? Is Satan threatened by the way you talk? Does he fear every time you open your mouth because he knows you are speaking blessing and thanksgiving? The spiritual triple threat is simple: BE, PRAY, GIVE. What are you waiting for? Put Satan on his heels today! Our opponent will do everything to prevent you from being a triple threat, but remember that there are athletes and coaches depending on you to be joyful, pray continually and give thanks.

Go 1. Are you a threat to Satan? Why or why not? 2. Out of three, which one is your strongest? Which one do you need to work on? 3. How can the spiritual triple threat change

your life? How can it change the lives of your teammates, coaches, family or friends? 4. Do you know someone who models a spiritual triple threat? Watch them. Study them. Take notes and incorporate some of their habits into your own daily spiritual development.

Workout

- Genesis 39
- Psalm 63:8
- Proverbs 12:18; 18:21; 28:14-14
- John 15:11
- 2 Corinthians 11:28
- Ephesians 4:29

Overtime ?Lord, thank You for the opportunity to be a light to others. I want to live my life through the power of the Holy Spirit and to put Satan on his heels every day. My goal is clear. My mission is set. Help me to be a threat to the enemy. I long to be joyful, to pray continually and to give thanks. Teach me, Lord Jesus, to be the triple threat. I will trust in Your work, Your way. Amen."

Bible Reference:

Ephesians 4



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