

Winning

Prince on Total Release Performance

Prince Amukamara (pronounced ah-moo-kuh-mara) made his first career start at cornerback in Nebraska's victory over Western Michigan. Besides making eight tackles, he also broke up a pass and had a quarterback hurry. He has continued his outstanding play in victories against San Jose State and New Mexico State. Along with several of his teammates, he attended an FCA Camp last year where he learned how to apply the "Total Release Performance" concept to football. Here is my interview with him following the New Mexico State game.

Q: How has the "Total Release Performance" concept helped you compete for Christ?

A: It has played a big part of helping me stay focused on playing my best and giving God the glory. Everyone wants to be a play maker and see themselves on the big screen. But learning how to give a "total release" for God has helped me give 100 percent on every play of the game no matter what the score is or how tired I might be. This allows me to concentrate on my assignment and leave the results to the Lord.

Q: What has the Lord been teaching you in chapel this year?

A: Our chaplain, Matt Penland, has been taking us through the Gospels. Right now we're focused on understanding what our motivation should be on and off the field. Some athletes are motivated by fame or money, but Matt has been reminding us that the quality of our athletic performance depends upon the quality of our love for God. Once we understood that God desires each Christian to express his love for Him with every ounce of ability, it has motivated us to play harder on the field.

Q: How does the Gospel impact your life?

A: It helps me understand what the purpose of sports should be when I recognize I have been forgiven for my sin against God because of the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross. God sent his one and only son to earth so he could pay the penalty for our sin. As someone that has repented of my sin and placed my faith in Christ, I have confidence that the Lord is in control of my past, present and future. Therefore, I don't need to worry about my stats or recognition that I might receive from playing football. The Lord will take care of the results, I just need to stay focused on being humble and playing for Him.

The "Total Release Performance" booklet by Wes Neal is available through the Nebraska FCA office or www.crosstrainingpublishing.com



WARMUP

Total Release Performance: Winning is the total release of all that you are toward becoming like Jesus Christ in each situation.

1. Watch the internet interview with Prince.
Go to www.youtube.com and search for "Prince Amukamara on Cross Training"

WORKOUT

1. Name an athlete you think of as "successful." What makes him or her a success? How is the biblical definition of Success different (Total Release Performance)?
2. How is Colossians 3:23 more than "just giving it all you got"?
3. Why were Ananias and Sapphira losers in Acts 5:14?
4. Read the following scriptures and write out what you think each verse teaches about success: Colossians 3:23, 2 Corinthians 5:20, and Colossians 3:17.
5. This week, write Colossians 3:23 on several 3 x 5 cards. Put the cards in your locker, bathroom mirror or any other location you often pass.

WRAPUP

This week, memorize...

"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men"
Colossians 3:23 (ESV)

PRAYER

Father, we confess our inability to enjoy sports in a way that brings you pleasure apart from the power and grace that you provide.

GOSPEL FOCUS

If we come to God in repentance we can be forgiven of every sin we ever committed or will commit. The unbearable weight of our sins will be removed, and God will credit Jesus' perfect life to us. God will look upon us as if we had never sinned and always perfectly obeyed him. It's an exchange of our sins for Christ's righteousness. God strips us of our filthy rags of sin and wraps us in white robes of righteousness. What a blessed exchange this is! – Stephen Altrogge

Gordon Thiessen is the founder of Cross Training Publishing and serves as the Director of Training and Resources for the Nebraska Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He is author of 12 books for Christian athletes and coaches that can be found at www.crosstrainingpublishing.com.

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