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Lou Holtz explains three rules of life to area high school kids

Before the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) featured Lou Holtz at their annual banquet in Baltimore, the Hall of Fame football took time to huddle with more than 1,300 high school students at Archbishop Spalding High School.

“Get rid of all the excuses for why you can’t do things,” Holtz told the Anne Arundel County school’s student body and FCA members from 11 other area schools. “The greatest power you have is the one to choose. Life is strictly about choices.”

The 79-year-old, who won 249 games in 33 years as a collegiate head coach and led Notre Dame to the 1988 national championship, used humor and magic to entertain and motivate kids who are more than 60 years his junior.

“When I was growing up, I never had any goals. In third grade I wanted to be garbage collector because they only work on Tuesdays,” joked Holtz. “I have been 18. You have never been 79, so I would pay attention.”

And they certainly did. For 45 minutes, Holtz shared life lessons to an engaged audience.

For the last 40 years, Holtz has lived by three rules. Number one is ‘Do What Is Right.’ He shared a story about being fired by Univer-

sity of Arkansas athletic director Frank Broyles in the early 1980s after leading the Razorbacks to a 60-21-2 record in seven seasons, which included four Top 10 finishes.

“I was so mad. I wanted to go to the media,” Holtz said. “I knew where all the bodies were buried. I wanted to tell everything, but my wife said no. We moved on and never said a negative word. Two years later Notre Dame was looking for a football coach. They called Frank Broyles and asked him what happened. Coach Broyles said he listened to someone who told him something that wasn’t true. I end up at Notre Dame because my wife would not allow me to be bitter to the guy who fired me.”

Holtz’s second rule to live by is ‘Be The Very Best You Can Be.’

“Not everyone can be an All-American. Not everyone can be first-team but everybody can be the best they are capable of being,” said Holtz, who left the coaching ranks in 2004. “People can give you titles but it is the people underneath that determine if you are a leader. You better



Lou Holtz, legendary Notre Dame football coach, jokes with a Spalding High School student while performing a magic trick for more than 1,300 students from 12 area schools at Spalding High School on March 14.

have a vision of where you want to go, a plan of how you are going to get there.”

The third rule for Holtz, who retired from ESPN last year after 11 years as a college football analyst, is ‘Show People You Care.’

“I have been married 55 years because I trust my wife and she trusts me. Every relationship is based on trust,” Holtz told the crowd. “Those three rules have never let me down. I have never needed a fourth one. If you want to be happy for a lifetime, follow those three rules. You will make a difference in people’s lives, including your own.”

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