

“Cease not to give thanks” (Ephesians 1:16).

Kate’s stomach dropped when the soccer field came into view from the car window. She knew the Bulldogs were the best in the league. But she didn’t think *this* many people would show up for tryouts.

She tightened her grip on her bag when she realized tryouts must have already started. It looked like they were doing drills. The girls were weaving between cones and sprinting across the grass. She was late! Kate jumped out of the car as soon as her mom pulled up.

She only made it a few steps before she remembered something important. She needed to say thank you! She circled back. “Thanks, Mom,” she called. “Thanks for driving me and for breakfast!”

Saying thank you wasn’t a big deal to a lot of people, but it was to Kate. Her favorite scripture story was the story of the ten lepers. She couldn’t believe that out of the ten people Jesus healed, only one said thank you! She’d made it a goal ever since to always say thank you.

Remembering that story made the tight feeling she had

inside loosen a little bit. At least until she joined the other girls in doing drills and saw how good they were. She couldn’t help worrying. *What if everyone else is way better than me?* she thought. *What if I’m the worst one here?*

But soon the coach divided them into teams for a practice game, and Kate stopped thinking of anything other than the black-and-white ball moving like lightning from one girl to the next.

She was breathing hard by the time the coach blew the whistle to end tryouts. “Great job, everyone,” he said. “I’ll make decisions in the next few days and let you know.”

Kate walked slowly over to her bag. Her whole body was splattered with mud. And her legs felt like slow, heavy elephant legs. Worst of all, she had no idea if she’d even come close to making the team.

She was one of the last girls to leave. “Thank you,” she said, smiling at the coach. He just gave her a short nod and turned back to his clipboard. But Kate felt a little better as she walked away. She might not make

the team, but at least she’d been grateful.

Later that night, Kate was washing dishes with her dad when the phone rang.

“I think it’s the soccer coach,” Dad said, looking at the number. Kate’s heart started pounding. He took the phone to the next room. Kate stayed at the sink, trying to focus all of her attention on washing the dishes.

When she heard Dad come in a few minutes later, she kept her eyes down. “What’d he say?” she asked.

“Just that my Katie is going to be a Bulldog,” he said, nudging her shoulder.

Her heart skipped a beat. “I made the team?” she said, finally looking up. Dad nodded with a big smile. Kate did a happy dance, splashing water over both of them.

“Hey!” Dad said with a laugh. “I have something even better to tell you once you quit being a human water fountain.” Kate paused mid-twirl. What could be better than making the number-one team in the league?

“Did you thank the coach at the end of tryouts?” he asked. Kate nodded. “Well, he wanted me to tell you



“There is one thing we can do to make life sweeter, more joyful, even glorious. We can be grateful!”
Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
“Grateful in Any Circumstances,” Ensign, May 2014, 70.

that he was really impressed by that. Of the 34 people who tried out, you were the only one that said thank you. He said to thank you for saying thank you.”

Dad’s smile was even bigger than before. Kate knew her own smile was just as big. *Just like the story of the ten lepers*, she thought. Being grateful *did* matter! ●

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See family manual, pages 72–73; Primary manual, page 71.

ILLUSTRATION BY JEFFEBELER

THE GRATITUDE GOAL

By Eliza Broadbent
(Based on a true story)

