

Power of Apology

Jake Powell, who used to play outfield for the New York Yankees and the Washington Senators, frequently acted on impulse. Eventually, he killed himself.

But there is a story worth remembering about this controversial athlete.

In Comiskey Park, Chicago, one day right before a game, a radio broadcaster grabbed him for an unrehearsed interview in which Powell made a thoughtless, slurring comment that alienated the black community. Emotions ran high. Threats of boycotts were voiced wherever Powell played.

When next in New York, Powell, unannounced and unescorted, worked Harlem from north to south. Stopping here and there, he would identify himself, apologize for a foolish mistake, and say he was sorry.

He understood an important principle about life and human relationships. It takes a big man – or woman – to admit a mistake, express regret for it, and seek forgiveness.

But the power of an apology is enormous, indeed.

--Beecher Hunter