

2021 Men's Training Camp - Final Sunday Session - Mr. Weston - "An Important Lesson from My Neighborhood"

Proverbs 8:1-3 - Wisdom is all around us. We can gain it from all kinds of places. Mr. Weston comes from a very friendly neighborhood. There are a lot of Mikes and Brad. Then there's Mary, the complainer, and Sandy, the QAnon buff. There are two Murphys and another dog who steals socks. Then there's Moe the remote-controlled lawn mower. Then there are times where they get together and have a drink and chat. If we don't meet people in the world, how can we let our lights shine?

There's Bill who just retired and got over COVID, and he's a talker. Then there's Becky who knows what's going on everywhere. Then there's Nelson, and he's very quiet. But if he does talk, it's extremely clever. One day, an ambulance showed up at Nelson's house. He came down with meningitis and was unresponsive. He was out of it for about a week but had one memory of being brought down the stair in a gurney, and he saw one of the Mike's at the base of the stairs.

He had tremendous bed sores for six months, but he's better now. His wife asked him, "Did you see a bright light? Did you see Jesus?" "No, and if I did, he looks a lot like Mike." This is the second crisis he's had in his life. Ten or twelve years ago, he was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). It was a miracle he survived. What was the miracle? The doctor he had realized that he had all the symptoms of ALS, but it didn't progress like it. So he got sent to another doctor, who had a great deal of patience, wisdom, and humility. He asked every detail about Nelson's daily routine and went through a typical week. Then he found out that he played golf on the weekends, and what he had for breakfast, his routine at the golf course, etc. After getting on the green, he would clean the ball off and lick it. Apparently, the course manager put certain chemicals on the grass to kill bugs. It was a neurotoxin and he was being poisoned after licking his ball eighteen times each round of golf.

This doctor had a great deal of patience to ask every detail of what happened in Nelson's life, and, in doing so, saved his life. You must be extremely patient for the lengthy talkers, and you have to be extremely patient with those who refuse to share anything at all. Listening is a large indicator of our character. We all want to get to know each other and to learn each other's skills and talents that can benefit each other!

Am I the talker who gets in people's faces regardless of how much the other person looks uncomfortable? Or am I never sharing anything? Do I know everything, or am I always complaining? Or am I careful with my words and share a tiny bit of wisdom when the situation arises. Or am I like the doctor who could draw people out and sit patiently while listening?

You can learn a lot by drawing out the wisdom from people. Mr. Weston wishes he could have asked more questions of his father and his military experiences and his life, overall. There's a time to talk and a time not to.

Where do I fit on the Talker Scale between 1-10? (Probably between 6-8, myself.) What does it feel like to be drawn out with numerous questions and worn down? There are people who only want to talk about serious things and wear you out, then there are those who never talk about anything serious.

God talks to us about two-way conversations with Him. We pray to Him, but we also read His Word. He loves to hear us. He is the most patient Being in all the universe. My mind might be all over the place half the time, and He must endure our randomness. We know what it's like to hear from our children, and sometimes it's wonderful, and sometimes it's exasperating.

Proverbs 17:27-28 - He who has knowledge spares his words. We're kind of born with the nature we end up with. There are expressions in the Bible where we need to be careful with our tongues. We need to have a calm spirit. "Even a fool is counted as wise when he keeps quiet. He's counted as perceptive if he keeps his lips closed." In the multitude of words, sin is not lacking. He who does not monitor his tongue is not wise. We need to think before we speak and not just spew out everything that comes to our minds.

"Wisdom is like deep water. And a man of understanding will draw it out." We need to draw out others for what they know because oftentimes those who are silent have the most to offer.

James. 1:19-20 – "Let every man be swift to hear and slow to speak. For the wrath of a man does not produce the righteousness of God." If we're angry, we must learn to choose our words carefully and listen a great deal more. Try to understand where the other person is coming from.

We all have natural proclivities, but it's important to be introspective and analyze our lives. Am I living up to my role as a man? "Hey, look at me!" It's not about me. We can admit our errors to others and change. We need to analyze what we're doing and saying and understand that we're not in perfect balance. "People don't care about how much you know until they know how much you care." (Theodore Roosevelt). Find that balance for each situation.

When we're talking about being a follower, it's in large part about having a heart of humility.