

Venting! Ok? Proverbs 29:11

Having watched years of sports, the impression of the coach is always instructive. There are some who yell and scream, others are contemplative and quiet, and some are nervous others confident. The display is at times embarrassing, sad to say. How the coach responds in the game tells much of their hearts and lives. The yelling may motivate but it does so in fear. Coaches who like to vent usually produce angry athletes, even though they may win the game.

Tuesday I coached my first volleyball game in 20 years. And yes, I remembered what a volleyball and the court looked like, but barely. While the game was on, the opposite coach spent much of the time yelling. She embarrassed both her team and herself, although, she would not agree with that assessment. When her girls did well there was deafening silence but let a miss-hit ball fall to the ground and it all broke loose. She quickly vented her brewing frustration. I will tell you that her ladies played harder after being yelled at but at a price, we don't know. We barely lost the game but kept our respect and kindness to one another. (Just to be proud for a moment, we just about won and they were supposed to crush us, ok enough pride).

Yesterday we had another game. The outcome was different. We won against another team supposed to beat us. But right in the middle of the match the referee made a huge blunder missing an obvious call in a tight game. The stands went crazy with yelling, booing, and verbal disgust. Another "venting" had occurred but it was from our stands so much so I had to stand and quiet them. Their frustration and disagreement were realized.

The Wise Writer in Proverbs says,

"A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back".

Is it wise to just "say it like it is" or "that is just how I am" or "I am being honest"? Wisdom says different. Pastors can even get into this in the pulpit. Much of what is inside ought not to come out, as it is predominately in the flesh. "I couldn't help it. I just had to say it". Interestingly, if they were warned by the referee to stop or leave, they would stop. Forced wisdom.

Showing our fleshy reactions are neither wise nor helpful. Speaking truth is good but it must be with love. Venting is a display of inner reality and the action teaches more than the words spoken. So remember the next time you proceed to berate the referee, coach, or players, fools vent, the wise prevent